

NEWS SUMMARY

Archer libel case brought forward

A judge has agreed to speed up the libel action brought by Mr Jeffrey Archer, the former deputy chairman of the Conservative Party, has over allegations that he had dealings with a prostitute.

Mr Archer, who resigned in October last year, claims allegations in *The Star* and *News of the World*, prevented him from continuing his political career.

Mr Robert Alexander, QC, for Mr Archer, told Mr Justice Boreham, Mr Archer's prospects of further employment in a field which is of interest to him had been "retarded".

The suggestion that he had sexual intercourse with a prostitute was very distressing for him and his family, Mr Alexander said.

The hearing against *The Star* which was not due to come to court until late 1988 will take place at the High Court between June and December this year. No application was made to expedite the claim against the *News of the World*.

Papers sued

Mr Alan Sapper, leader of the television technicians' union, has issued High Court libel writs against seven national newspapers over articles published last November and December.

Mr Sapper, aged 56, general secretary of the Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians, is suing *The Times*, *Sunday Express*, *Daily Express*, *The Star*, *Mail on Sunday*, *Daily Mail* and *Today*, alleging that they falsely and maliciously published words which mean he had mis-spent union funds.

Strike at publisher

Editorial staff at Macmillan Books, the publishing company owned by Lord Stockton, are to stage a series of half-day and one-day strikes next week and an indefinite strike from April 1.

The dispute is over a demand by the 90 members of the National Union of Journalists at the company for a 10 per cent pay increase. The company has offered 7.7 per cent, with 4 per cent for lower grades.

The strike is thought to be the first serious industrial action to have occurred at the company.

L-driver gets 4 years

A learner-driver was jailed for four years for manslaughter and given a three-year driving ban yesterday after dragging a motorist along the road while speeding from a crash.

Mr John Parker, aged 27, the victim, was trapped by his arm in the car door and pulled along until Mark Matthews, a scaffolder, of Russell Street, Cathays, Cardiff, shook him off.

Matthews, aged 24, who had no licence or insurance, had crashed his car into the back of Mr Parker's van, Cardiff Crown Court was told.

Mr Parker, of Llanishen, Cardiff, whose leg was broken, died two days later in hospital after complications set in.

Bowie in Aids test

David Bowie, the rock star, disclosed yesterday that he has taken an Aids test.

Speaking in London to promote his forthcoming world tour, he described Aids as "one of the most frightening diseases that this planet has ever faced".

He said he backed the use of condoms and urged everyone who changes sexual partners to take a test.

Bowie, aged 40, who lives near Lake Geneva, Switzerland, will play a concert at Wembley Stadium, London, on June 20.

BR works chiefs go

The chairman and manufacturing director are to leave British Rail Engineering where 1,400 redundancies were announced this week.

Mr Philip Norman and Mr Geoff James will go when the company is reorganized next month, it was announced. The British Railways Board said Mr Norman was standing down "by amicable arrangement" and Mr James was moving to another job.

British Rail said that Mr Norman, executive chairman of BREL, would be succeeded as non-executive chairman by Sir David Nicholson. Sir David is also chairman of Vickers Shipbuilding and Engineering.

Pay award 'will speed up brain drain'

By Michael McCarthy and Sheila Gunn

Pressure is mounting on the Government to stop the drastic cutback in university scientific research following last month's university pay award.

Mr Neil Kinnock, leader of the Labour Party, and a Tory backbencher added their voices yesterday to the chorus of protest from the scientific community, while Professor Bill Mitchell, chairman of the Science and Engineering Research Council, went to see Mr Kenneth Baker, Secretary of State for Education and Science, to make a personal appeal.

The Government is providing the five research councils with no extra funds to meet the 24 per cent pay award, which they had no part in negotiating, but which affects the thousands of researchers they employ in universities.

They are having to fund it out of existing budgets and can find the money — about £15m between them — only by slashing research projects. The councils have frozen all new university research.

It is feared that the pay award, which was designed to halt the "brain drain" of scientists to the United States, will now have the effect of speeding it up.

Yesterday Mr Kinnock wrote to Mrs Thatcher urging her to release new funds for the SERC immediately.

The Natural Environment Research Council, which is £500,000 short decided on Thursday night to suspend its forthcoming round of new grants, shelving until next January at the earliest about 100 university and polytechnic research projects, ranging from studies of atmospheric pollution to geological studies bearing on oil exploration.

The council spoke of its "grave concern" and one of its members, Professor Roger Whittenbury, of the University of Warwick, commented: "The effect will be like star-

ving somebody of oxygen for five minutes of his life: extremely distressing — if he survives."

The Economic and Social Research Council, which is still quantifying the extra money it will need, decided yesterday that practically all new research projects on subjects ranging from information technology to industrial competitiveness will have to be shelved next year.

The Medical Research Council, needing to find an extra £4.2 million, is meeting next week.

Last night the Association of University Teachers joined in the clamour for further funds to be made available. Its

deputy general secretary, Mr John Akker, said that the AUT was "appalled" that Professor Mitchell's approach to Mr Baker had had no result.

● The Stock Exchange has created a bursary scheme giving 30 high-quality physics graduates £1,000 each to become teachers, provided they work for three summer vacations with a major British company.

Mr Baker hopes that the three-year pilot scheme will both set a new trend in the City for sponsorship of trainee teachers and also make the teaching of science in schools more responsive to industry's need for suitably qualified high-technology staff.

Broadwater police are accused of Nazi revenge

By Toby Young

Community leaders on the Broadwater Farm estate said yesterday that the wrong men had been convicted for the murder of PC Keith Blacklock.

Mr Stafford Scott, Vice-Chairman of the Broadwater Farm Youth Association, said: "Youth in our community feel nothing but disgust at the verdict. There is no way that those people should be serving life sentences. None of the defendants stood a hope in hell of getting British justice. This was revenge and revenge is not justice."

Community leaders, including Haringey Labour councillor Miss Martha Osamor, were unanimous in their condemnation of the Tottenham Police's investigation of the murder of the policeman during the disturbance on the estate on the night of October 6th 1985.

Councillor Osamor, reading a statement from the family of Enghin Raghpi, a 20-year-old white youth who received a life sentence for his part in PC Blacklock's murder, said: "The police acted like German Nazis. They came into our house like Nazis. Someone has got to be punished for what they did."

Mr Osamor was not prepared, however, to urge those she believed were guilty of PC Blacklock's murder to come forward. "It's up to the police to get off their backsides and find the guilty men," she said.

The father of Mr Winston Silcott, the 27-year-old youth sentenced to 30 years' imprisonment for the murder of PC Blacklock, said: "It is not right. It is not right in the sight of God."

Mr Millard Scott, a community activist on the estate, commenting on the fact that Silcott was out on bail for another murder charge on the night of PC Blacklock's murder, said: "Why did the judge

give him bail? Because he knew he was innocent."

Mr Scott, who was at school with Mr Silcott, compared the Tottenham police to the security forces in South Africa. He said: "This country hasn't any right to talk about South Africa because you haven't got your own house in order. You treat us just the same."

Mr Stafford Scott, Millard's brother, said: "We don't want war, we don't want confrontation, we want parity and we want justice. We shall not stop fighting, we shall not lay down, we have a right to live and we are going to exercise that right."

The Broadwater Farm Defence Committee has organised a "picket" of Tottenham police station this morning to protest against the verdict in the trial. About 100 demonstrators are expected to be present.

A number of MPs called yesterday for Judge Lydney QC to resign, and for a review of the Bail Act 1976, after the disclosure that he granted bail to Silcott.

Judge Lydney has already defended his decision to grant bail, made in Chambers, saying he does not have PC Blacklock's death on his conscience.

Lawyers yesterday were at odds over whether the judge had made a proper decision: some prosecution lawyers described his decision as "extraordinary". They said there was ample ground under the Bail Act for the judge to refuse bail notwithstanding that he did not know of the 1980 murder acquittal.

Some lawyers said the judge could have refused bail on the grounds that Silcott was likely to interfere with witnesses, a ground born out by the "overwhelming atmosphere of fear" at the committal proceedings five days before Judge Lydney granted bail, one barrister said.

Trial judge's criticism to be studied by Yard

By Stewart Tindler, Crime Reporter

Senior Scotland Yard officers are to study transcripts of the criticisms made by the judge on the police handling of the juveniles in the PC Blacklock murder trial.

Two of the three youths accused of the murder were acquitted after Mr Justice Hodgson ruled against confessions obtained by detectives.

The Police Complaints Authority said yesterday that it was already supervising the investigation of five complaints involving police actions or interviews after the riot which led to 359 arrests. Complaints by the two youths have not been received.

The inquiries are nearing completion but a senior officer in overall charge of many investigations is not prepared to be interviewed until all the riot trials are complete.

The two youths, aged 15 and 16, were cleared after the judge pointed to breaches of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act and the Children and Young Offenders Act in the way they were interviewed.

In the case of the youth aged 15 the judge found 11 points on which to criticize the police action, including the refusal to allow access to a solicitor, undue delay in charging the youth, failing to have the correct adult monitor interviews, never telling the youth or the adults with him he was suspected of murder, and improprieties in the way he was handled.

Applying the tests laid out under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act for the validity of confessions the judge considered that the police had acted oppressively on three points and extracted a confession which was unreliable on eight counts.

Teachers get court warning on frogspawn

By Richard Ford

Schoolteachers in the Irish Republic yesterday admitted to government officials they were guilty of breaking the law — by taking frogspawn without a licence.

Although no action will be taken against them, an official pledged extra "vigilance" by conservation officers at ponds and rivers.

The Wildlife Section of the Department of Fisheries and Forestry said that since 1976 a special licence was needed to take frogspawn from the wild.

The move was designed to save the frog from extinction. Offenders can be fined £50 and the courts can take possession of anything used in committing the offence, which could include a car.

Compromise candidate looks favourite

By Richard Ford

The three contenders hoping to succeed Dr Garret FitzGerald as Fine Gael leader were all confident of victory in this morning's ballot for a new opposition leader.

The last 24 hours of the leadership struggle saw the candidates attempting to win over wavering colleagues and to discover the intent of at least a dozen other voters.

The three-line party whip on the 82 deputies, senators, and Euro MPs, ordering them not to discuss the contest with the media, has avoided any public bitterness between the rivals.

However, disagreements between the younger contenders about their level of support may favour Mr Peter Barry, aged 58, the party's deputy



A weeping William Silcott, the father of the convicted killer. (Photograph: John Rogers).

Amnesty is sought on illegal guns

By Sheila Gunn

Mr Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary, came under increased pressure last night to grant an amnesty on all illegally held guns and other weapons to help check the rising tide of violent crime.

Home Office ministers are known to be considering an amnesty, but an announcement is not expected "within the next few weeks".

A change in the law is not required although the last amnesty in 1968 coincided with the introduction of the Firearms Act, tightening up controls on the supply of weapons.

That amnesty resulted in 25,000 guns being handed in to the police.

The police believe the thriving black market in offensive weapons makes it easy for many criminals to buy guns to order.

Mr Frank Dobson, chairman of the London Labour MPs' group, said yesterday that Mr Hurd owed it to the people of London and to the police to do everything possible to stop the soaring use of guns and knives.

In the three years to 1985 there had been a 81 per cent rise in armed raids on high street banks.

The latest Home Office figures revealed a continuing increase in violent crime, particularly sexual offences and thefts.

Mr Dobson called for: ● an amnesty to encourage people to hand in guns and knives; ● this would be followed by a campaign against those still found in illegal possession; ● tighter controls on the sale of weapons; ● stricter requirements for those legally owning weapons.

Kinnock attacks tax cuts 'disease'

By Ronald Faux, Employment Affairs Correspondent

Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour Party leader, said yesterday that Europe had been infected by a political and economic virus which placed tax cuts above unemployment cuts and gave greater rewards to moving money than making things.

At a conference of European trade unionists in London, Mr Kinnock called for a radical change in European industrial policy. He said the virus of depression and bogus prudence had taken a malevolent grip on Europe.

It was based on the idea that economic efficiency was best attained if the government abdicated all responsibility for industrial development and handed the future of the economy over to the caprices and convenience of the uncontrolled market and those who dominated that system.

Such governments looked on the overall level of output and employment in their economies as beneath their concern, Mr Kinnock said. They concentrated on a path of strict public monetary rectitude, encouraging massive private debt and shirking their duty to manage the economy.

He said: "Nowhere has this approach to economic affairs been pursued with such narrow-minded fanaticism as here in Britain."

"Here the idea has been tested to destruction — the destruction of British industry and two million manufacturing jobs."

Mr Kinnock called for investment-based expansion so that consumption was backed by production. The alternative to that arduous but essential route was to continue with policies borrowed from the nineteenth century and watch depression become more contagious across Europe.

He said the European market was now so depressed that industry was not investing enough in research, training and retraining. It was falling behind Japan and the United States and making the Continent liable to economic colonization by the producers of the Pacific Basin.

Europe needed an industrial strategy of managed trade, he said, which ensured that expansion was not the source of uncontrollable deficit. The disease that had given Europe 18 million unemployed and lost world trade share could be cured, he said.

Rate rebels miss 'fine'

There will be no attempt to surcharge councillors in four Labour boroughs for failing to set rates on time in 1985, it was disclosed yesterday.

Last week the Audit Commission confirmed that Mr Brian Skinner, the London District Auditor, was looking into the fact that Camden, Hackney, Islington and Southwark had not set rates until May or June in 1985. Yesterday it emerged that a decision to call off the inquiry would be announced within the next few weeks.

Mr Skinner has decided that the huge legal costs of taking the councillors to court would not be worth it so long after the event.

His decision comes after a House of Lords ruling last week upholding surcharges totalling more than £106,000 on rebel Labour councillors from Liverpool who delayed setting a rate until June.

In all 10 Labour councils failed to set a rate on time for 1985.

Security alert on double deaths

By Tony Dawe

Security services have been alerted over the deaths of two computer experts and the disappearance of a third.

A senior detective in Bristol, where both men died more than 120 miles from their homes, indicated yesterday that he had discussed the deaths with security chiefs.

A security source in London confirmed that inquiries are being made.

Det Supt Arthur Ford, deputy head of Avon and Somerset CID, provided new evidence to prove that one of the men, Mr Ashad Sharif, had killed himself deliberately. "He left a tape-recording in his car that was tantamount to a suicide note."

But he added that there was still "no logical reason" for the apparent suicide of Mr Vimal Dajibhai, a computer programmer working on air-sea missiles and employed, like Mr Sharif, by the Marconi Group.

Derbyshire police said yesterday that they were baffled by the disappearance of the third man, Mr Avtar Singh-Gida, who was working on a Ministry of Defence-funded project at Loughborough University.

The three men were working on programmes which would help to locate submarines at vast depths, including the new range of Soviet "Mike" nuclear submarines.

The security aspects of the affair were raised at a police press conference yesterday.

Mr Ford said: "It is not our policy to discuss matters of national security."

Mr Ford said that inquiries had failed to produce any reason why Mr Dajibhai, aged 24, from Kenton, north London, should have killed himself, apparently by jumping off Clifton suspension bridge.

"He was a happily married man with good career prospects and no financial problems," Mr Ford said.

He added that a puncture mark on Mr Dajibhai's buttock — the subject of speculation — was caused by bone fragmenting and penetrating the skin from the inside.

Clear reasons existed, however, to show that Mr Sharif, aged 26, from Walthamstow, north-east London, wanted to commit suicide, Mr Ford said.

"He was suffering from depression at the time of his death and had personal problems. He left a tape recording in his car which was tantamount to a suicide note and we also found written correspondence."

But he confirmed that Mr Dajibhai had known the man missing in Derbyshire, Mr Singh-Gida, aged 26, who disappeared when carrying out an underwater acoustics experiment.

The Ministry of Defence is expected to make a statement on the affair next week.

BR plans threaten print jobs

By Jonathan Miller

British Rail is heading towards a confrontation with the printing industry's largest union over plans to modernize its national newspaper distribution system.

To stop newspapers from abandoning its network, has proposed a new form of end-to-end distribution using trains and trucks to deliver papers from printing plants to wholesalers.

The proposal threatens the jobs of hundreds of members of the Sogat '82 printing union, which has been responsible for moving newspapers to terminals, and picking them up at distant stations for distribution to wholesalers.

At a dinner for managing directors of all the national newspapers except those published by News International, Mr Jim O'Brien, managing director of British Rail, said the new arrangements were intended to be competitive with end-to-end road haulage.

British Rail's newspaper distribution system is making big losses after News International, its biggest customer, switched to road distribution last year. It took the step after threats by railwaymen to "black" its titles in sympathy with dismissed printworkers.

British Rail is suing News International for about £38 million for the loss of the remaining four and a half years of the contract, valued at £9 million a year.

A British Railways Board source said that if other big publishers abandon the rail network the system could become unviable. British Rail still hoped to lure News International back to its network, now that the dispute had ended at its Wapping plant, east London.

Miss Brenda Dean, general secretary of Sogat '82, was abroad on union business last night and could not be reached for comment.

Seamen de review over of design in

Catholics lobby for women priests

Seamen demand a review over safety of design in ferries

By Rodney Cowton and David Sapped

The National Union of Seamen yesterday called for a review of the design of roll-on roll-off ferries after the Zeebrugge disaster.

This is one of 10 demands made by Mr Sam McCluskie, the union's general secretary, in a letter to Mr John Moore, Secretary of State for Transport.

Mr McCluskie says the height of the car ferries has raised questions about accessibility to the boat decks and to the means of escape from decks high above the water level.

He suggests that Mr Moore should urge the International Maritime Organization to carry out a review of the design of the ferries.

Mr McCluskie says that:

- A solution must be found to the problem of rapid water intake into the vehicle decks
- Evacuation facilities and procedures for capsized ships must be examined
- Plans to pass responsibility for supervision of the construction of ferries to private classification societies should be scrapped
- The number of Department of Transport inspectors should be increased
- Inspectors should receive formal training to deal with workplace safety issues
- Clear instructions should be issued that loading doors must be closed before a ferry goes to sea
- Standards should be laid down for the provision of ventilation equipment on car decks
- The present limit of £38,000 for compensation for passengers' loss of life, laid down in the 1974 Athens Convention, should be raised
- Guidelines regarding the lashing of heavy vehicles on car decks should be reviewed

The Department of Transport said the letter was being carefully considered, and Mr Moore would reply in due course.

A six-man steering committee to spearhead claims by bereaved families and survivors of the Zeebrugge disaster was set up in London last night.

More than 100 solicitors met in Central Hall, Westminster, to co-ordinate attempts to achieve the maximum payouts for their clients' from Townsend Thoresen.

Immediately after the committee had been elected at the end of three hours of discussion, it held its first meeting which was expected to centre on pursuing a claim for recklessness against the ferry company.

It will be necessary to prove - or for Townsend Thoresen to concede - recklessness if compensation is to exceed the £38,000 limit for a passenger's death at sea.

Mr Michael Napier, whose firm, Pamome Napier, was involved in claims after the Manchester air disaster and which organized yesterday's meeting, said afterwards that he hoped the committee would meet Townsend Thoresen representatives in the near future, possibly next week.

There had been unanimous agreement, he added, on the need to establish a committee to work out the future conduct of claims in a co-ordinated way.

He refused to say whether test cases were likely to be brought in an attempt to prove recklessness.

Mr Christopher Erving, the National Union of Seamen's solicitor, said he expected to lodge claims next week of up to £200,000 each on behalf of crew members. His firm,

Suggles Palmer, is representing the families of 33 crew who died in the disaster, and more than 30 survivors.

He left the meeting early explaining that he could play no part on any committee as there was a potential conflict of interest between the NUS claims - whose members are not bound by the Athens Convention - and any attempts to prove recklessness by solicitors acting for passengers.

Mr Erving was also critical of the way the Law Society had allowed Pamome Napier to dominate the arrangements for yesterday's meeting.

"I think it would have been proper to involve other firms - and I exclude my own - who are proficient and expert in this form of litigation," he said.

Rough seas yesterday forced the salvage operations on the capsized ferry, Herald of Free Enterprise, to be called off for the third time in five days.

The latest hold-up casts further doubt on whether the Dutch salvage team, which had to abandon work on Monday and Wednesday as well, will be able to meet the target date of March 27-30 for righting the vessel.

With the weekend forecast predicting winds up to force seven and with the sea swell running at more than six feet, it proved impossible yesterday to sink any more of the steel tubes necessary to anchor the barge in a co-ordinated way.

Before salvage workers abandoned the operation, the welding of 42 securing points to the hull was completed.

Divers also recovered a woman's body overnight from inside the vessel, bringing the total of victims found so far to 57. Another 77 are still missing.

British Petroleum has awarded him £250 from its Youth and Industry scheme.

(Photograph: Graham Wood).

Edward Bond, a pupil at Eton College, plans to use a machine-gun to make sure he passes an A level examination in design and technology.

But he will not be doing any shooting. He is planning to restore the tripod of a Maxim Nordenfolt owned by the College Cadet Corps since 1926.

The gun, which dates back to 1889, was last used 50 years ago, when a group of Eton boys took it into Windsor Park.

Edward, aged 17, says he is determined to restore the gun to its full glory on its tripod, by the end of the year, from photographs and measurements of the original design.

The image is about as Victorian as they come. "The Achievement of Sir Galahad of the Sang Graal Accompanied by Sir Bors and Sir Percival".

The Japanese have now joined the Europeans and Americans as active buyers.

The top price was £24,200 (estimate £20,000-£30,000) for a Gallé *marqueterie sur verre* glass vase of about 1900.

● The clutter that the great Surrealist artist René Magritte left in his studio when he died in 1967, along with paintings, drawings and letters, has been consigned to Sotheby's for sale on July 2 at 2.30pm.

This is no ordinary clutter, but rather the inspiration of some of the most famous Surrealist paintings, including the bowler hat which recurs constantly in his pictures.

In all, there will be more than 300 lots.

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Dr Peter Morris, honorary secretary of the association, said that there had been concern for some time over the skill of anaesthetists in some of the smaller wards.

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Dr Ramachandran Subramanian, of Manor Hospital, Walsall, was admonished by the General Medical Council's professional conduct committee, but was told he would not be struck off the medical register.

Earlier, a leading anaesthetist had told the hearing in London that one in every 100 women having a caesarean operation to give birth will be aware of what is going on during part of the operation.

Even up-to-date techniques could not block everything out in all cases, Dr Roland Hargrove told the committee.

Dr Hargrove, of Westminster Hospital, London, said that at the time there was a 5 per cent awareness level which had now been reduced to 1 per cent. That was because of the conflict of providing enough oxygen not to harm the unborn child, yet put the mother to sleep.

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Judges resist longer hours and summer holiday cut

By Frances Gibb, Legal Affairs Correspondent

Proposals from government officials to cut delays in the civil courts by making judges sit longer hours and by cutting their two-month summer vacation look certain to run into opposition from High Court and Court of Appeal judges.

Sir John Donaldson, Master of the Rolls, who heads the Court of Appeal's civil division, says that although judges may sit for only five hours in court, excluding lunch hour, they are already working longer hours in terms of reading and preparation in their rooms and at home.

That is part of the case in the Court of Appeal, he says, where the more judges can pre-read counsel's skeleton arguments the more they can cut down on time in court. "I am here at nine and I work through to six, and I rarely have lunch."

On top of that, he says, many judges take work home in the evenings and weekends. "It is not really on to increase those hours."

Judges are also doing highly concentrated work when sitting on cases, he says, and it is questionable whether they could absorb more by sitting a longer day.

A consultation paper from the Lord Chancellor's Department last week proposed a far-reaching package of reforms to make more efficient the processing of civil disputes, including extending judges' working days from five to six hours.

The Master of the Rolls, who has already led the way in improving productivity in the Court of Appeal, indicated there could be difficulties, too, with abolishing the long summer vacation.

"The only reason we do not run courts through August here is that the legal profession does not want it," he said. "That would not deter us if we thought we could still do so efficiently, but it is no good listing cases which no one has the slightest intention of being heard."

If judges were to be deprived of their holidays in the

summer, the equivalent time would have to be taken out of term time "so it may be inefficient, in terms of pure output, to have vacation sittings, although it does help avoid delays building up."

Sir John has overseen a radical package of reforms to cut delays in the Court of Appeal, including some court sittings in the long vacation. In January the idea of the "floating court" was introduced, which enables an extra court to sit, by rationalizing the spare time in other courts resulting from judges' reading and judgement-writing days.

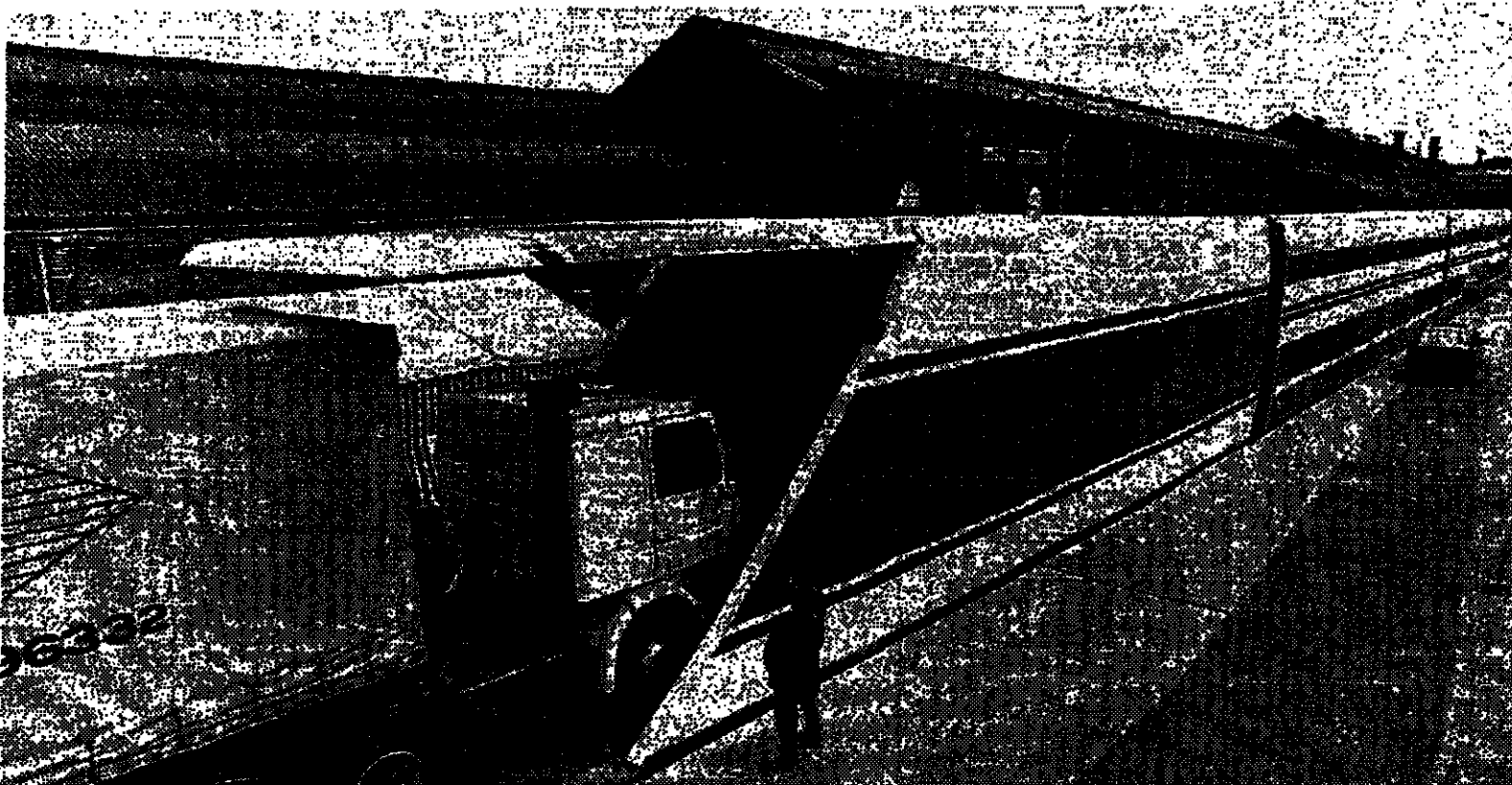
That brings the total number of courts to eight, which is helping to cut the backlog of short, interim applications which can be heard by two judges.

But there is still the question of 12-15 months' delay in the long cases needing three judges. There are plans for more Court of Appeal courtrooms but not for another 18 months. Meanwhile Sir John has issued a warning that the time between the setting down of a civil appeal and its hearing will increase.

Last year up to October, 428 appeals were allowed and 642 dismissed. The court's work is mounting. Last year 1,604 new appeals were set down, compared with 1,572 the year before. A total of 1,207 were disposed of after a hearing.



Sir John, who works nine to six and rarely has lunch



Mock-up wagons for the proposed cross-Channel shuttle train, being tested yesterday at Ashford, Kent. The full-size models will be used to work out the best ways of getting cars and lorries off the 100mph shuttle.

The system being assessed by Eurotunnel and Transmanche-Link, its main contractors, is a closed drive-on drive-off railway that would use large closed wagons built to run on standard gauge track. Three types of wagon, single and double

deck, are being considered. Passengers would have enough room to walk alongside their parked cars in case of emergencies during the 33-minute journey, only 25 minutes of which would be spent in the tunnel (Photograph: Nick Rogers).

£5m legal services centre for Glasgow

A legal services centre is to be built close to the new Sheriff Court on the south side of Glasgow at a cost of £5 million, it was announced yesterday.

It will be the first in the UK to house crown officers and private law firms under the same roof.

The scheme includes £250,000 for refurbishing the Citizens' Theatre which will get a new frontage, improved amenities and a restaurant and bar.

The centre will be built on a site at the corner of Ballater Street and Gorbals Street diagonally opposite the Sheriff Court, by Co-operative Holdings in association with the Scottish Development Agency (SDA) and Glasgow District Council.

The centre was conceived by the SDA's property development division because relocation of the court, the busiest in Europe, has shifted the focus of legal activity in the city and also an ideal opportunity would be created for new investment in the Gorbals district.

Site work on the 80,000 sq ft centre will begin in October

The Procurator Fiscal's department is at present dispersed throughout the city. The new offices will provide accommodation for the entire department.

Market research identified a demand for quality accommodation for private law firms close to the Sheriff Court.

The three-storey development will provide a flexible accommodation in a modular layout for small to medium size firms and also for larger practices which need satellite offices for court work.

Centralized reception, security and business support services will be available, plus a law library and conference facilities.

The plans for the theatre, which will be linked to the new centre, will greatly improve its appearance and amenities.

There will also be a convenience store providing facilities for court and legal centre workers during the day and after hours in the evening.

A new park will be created at a site jointly by the district council and the local community council.

Fears on aviation insurance

By Harvey Elliott, Air Correspondent

Aviation insurers fear that one big disaster could wipe out their entire cash fund and lead to another huge increase in premiums.

Insurance companies, mainly based in London, are still reeling from the massive claims of 1983.

They are also facing even higher bills as lawyers in America succeed in claims under the "product liability" laws.

Any aircraft manufacturer or sub-contractor whose product failure leads to an accident can be sued for millions of dollars.

Now airlines have been warned not to expect any reduction in their insurance costs in spite of a much better year in 1986.

Mr Ray Dowling, outgoing chairman of the Aviation Insurance Officers Association, said: "We have had a very difficult time and there is not a lot in the kitty. One bad accident in the United States could wipe out the balance entirely."

Vaccine for tooth decay is shelved

By Thomson Prentice, Science Correspondent

A research project to develop a vaccine for tooth decay in children has been shelved after 12 years, after the Government withdrew its support and £1 million in funding.

The vaccine, developed by British scientists, has shown "highly encouraging" results in laboratory and animal tests and could be of "enormous benefit", the researchers said yesterday.

However, it has still to be tested on humans.

The vaccine has been designed to counter the action of bacteria in the mouth which cause dental caries, more commonly known as tooth decay.

The researchers believe it should be given to children before they get their first teeth or, alternatively, about the age of five years.

"There is a worldwide need for methods to prevent dental caries", Dr Roy Russell, a microbiologist and chief researcher of the project, told a World Health Organization conference in Geneva yesterday.

"Diet control and fluoride treatment schemes can make a

major impact but a vaccine, if cheap and readily available, could also prove of enormous benefit."

The Royal College of Surgeons was contracted by the Department of Health and Social Security in the 1970s to set up the vaccine research team and the Wellcome drug company was brought in to handle development research.

But the department withdrew its support about 18 months ago because of growing evidence of a decline in tooth decay in Britain, and general anxieties about vaccine safety.

"A major worry is that even the slightest hint that there might be a risk associated with the vaccine... could have consequences not only for the future of caries vaccination but also a drastic knock-on effect on the uptake of other important vaccines", Dr Russell said yesterday.

His research colleague, Dr Newell Johnson, a dental surgeon, said: "Despite the encouraging decline in tooth decay in recent years millions of children remain at risk."

Deserter accused of killing girl in the US

By David Sapedet

Lawyers in the United States are to consider seeking the death penalty for a British Army deserter who goes on trial at the end of this month charged with strangling a girl aged 15.

Washington state prosecutors must decide before the trial of David John Bridon, aged 23, from Newton Hall, Co Durham, whether to press for the death penalty on a charge of aggravated first-degree murder.

Mr Bridon went absent without leave from the 15/19 King's Royal Hussars in February last year while serving as a trooper at the Royal Artillery Centre in Bovington, Dorset. He was due to face theft charges before Durham magistrates at the time.

He is accused of murdering Laura Michele Thelen, whose body was found at her home in Everett, Washington State, by her mother last August.

Mr Bridon, who prosecutors say met the girl on a bus, was later arrested in Tucson, Arizona, after a couple accused him of theft. His trial is due to start on March 30.

Mr Michael McGee, Snohomish County deputy prosecutor, said yesterday that new evidence from one of Mr Bridon's fellow inmates had led to the charge, being increased from first-degree murder to an aggravated offence. If the death penalty is not sought and Mr Bridon is convicted, the penalty would be life imprisonment, with no parole.

Printer bound over after demonstration

Philip Paddock, an unemployed printer, of Newark Road, Croydon, south London, was bound over for 12 months in the sum of £1,000 by Thames magistrates yesterday. He denied using threatening behaviour during a demonstration at the News International plant at Wapping, east London, on December 7 last year.

Paul Johnson, aged 21, a student of Hayes, south London, was remanded on bail until April 28 by Wells Street magistrates, accused of threatening behaviour outside the plant on January 2.

March 20 1987 PARLIAMENT

Tory demands for return of capital punishment

LAW AND ORDER

Demand for the restoration of capital punishment and a review of the operation of the Bail Act were made during a Commons debate on law and order. A Home Office minister pointed out that despite the crime figures, Britain remained one of the safest countries in the world.

Mr Iain Mills (Meriden, C), opening the debate, said there was evidence from the increased crime statistics that there had been a huge change in the attitude of society and individuals towards wrongdoing. While there was no doubt that crime was a serious problem, unemployment might be one factor and another was deterrence.

It disturbed him that they did not have the deterrent of capital punishment. This would be seen as "deliberately evil wrongdoers" as a sufficient deterrent. Part of the problem was the perception of wrongdoing that society would somehow let them off and take a lenient attitude towards crime.

That atmosphere led to a potential wrongdoer to conclude that crime was not bad and that there was no real penalty against it. He had voted on four occasions for the return of capital punishment and would do so again when the opportunity arose.

While not criticising the technical decisions of the judiciary in granting bail, there was concern when murders and serious crimes were committed by those freed on bail. He echoed the call for a review of the Bail Act and the way it was used.

Mr Virginia Bottomley (South West Surrey, C) said that the ghastly murder of PC Blacklock showed how people could be intimidated, feeling they could not report information without recrimination. A sensible working relationship with the police was very important.

Mr William Hamilton (Central Fife, Lab), criticising the behaviour of Conservative MPs, named several constituencies whose MPs should be on a committee to draw attention to the decline of national morals and the consequent increase in crime.

The chairman, he said, should be Mr Cecil Parkinson (Hertsmere), the vice-chairman Mr Nicholas Fairbairn (Perth and Kinross), with members being Mr Winston Churchill (Dorset), Mr Geoffrey Dickens (Littleborough and Saddleworth), Mr Norman Lamont (Kingston upon Thames), Mr John Browne (Winchester). The chief whip for the committee should be Mr Harvey Proctor (Billerica).

"The morals of these MPs make the behaviour of tom cats almost respectable," the Deputy Speaker (Mr Harold Walker) asked for the reference to tom cats to be

nonsense to suggest that crimes of violence were not treated seriously by the higher courts. To continuously suggest that sentences were not adequate and deterring, was undermining the deterrence of the courts.

As a former minister in the Home Office, he had been responsible for giving advice that led to the release of a man from Broadmoor who then committed several further murders.

With hindsight it was tragic that the man had been released.

There had been a call for the return of capital punishment, but an examination of cases over the last 10 years showed that a third of them had had convictions quashed. With capital punishment, those people would have been hanged.

Mr Douglas Hogg, Under Secretary of State, Home Office, said that the Government was deeply concerned about rising crime rates and about the decline in the clear-up rates. But the figures must be put into perspective.

The rate of increase in crime was very much in line with the average rate of increase since 1955. Not all classes of crime were rising at the same rate. Most crimes were against property and did not involve violence. Offences against the person increased in 1986 by 3 per cent, and the elderly were the least likely victims.

There were different ways of presenting the figures. One burglary a minute sounded an alarming statistic. But it only implied one burglary in 35 years for the average person, who could also expect a robbery once every 450 years and a assault resulting in injury once a century. Britain remained one of the safest countries in the world.

Far too often, far too many people who held responsible positions in the Labour Party had associated themselves with actions which had banded to destroy the cohesive nature of society and which had done real damage to the police service and the concept of public order.

He cited Mr Ken Livingstone, prospective Labour candidate for Brent East, who had argued that two IRA bombers should not be extradited from the Netherlands and had described them as political refugees. Linda Bellos, Labour leader in Lambeth who had accused the police of deliberately creating tensions in Brixton. Mr Bernie Grant, Labour leader of Haringey, who had justified the murder of PC Blacklock and the riots with the words that "the police got a bloody good hiding" and who had compounded that today when he knew the circumstances of the murder by stating they were a useful safety valve.

CONSERVATIVE CENTRAL COUNCIL

Tebbit attacks Kinnock and Alliance policy

Mr Norman Tebbit, chairman of the Conservative Party, listed a series of local council by-election successes for the party and said they were an extremely good augury for the local government elections on May 7.

"We have an opportunity to liberate many people from Liberal, Social Democrat, Labour and Lib-Lab councils and get back to good honest Conservative government in local authorities. This is a party on the move. We are moving forward and the country is moving forward too."

The Conservatives were and would remain the party of government, not because of a lack of a credible alternative but because they were the loyal and effective custodians of the nation's interests and applied the policies which they knew and the British people in their hearts knew ought to be applied and because those policies had worked.

The opposition parties had to make a choice between reversing the policies that the Conservatives had implemented which had been making life better in Britain or applying their discredited plans for more lavish spending.

"The strength of our economy reflects the success of our

policies. Since the last general election investment has risen nine times."

The growing economy in Britain was providing the wealth needed to build a better Britain, not a Britain just for the strong and the rich, but a Britain in which the strong and rich were encouraged so that they had the wealth needed to help the weak and the poor.

For Conservatives it was not enough just to talk about helping those in need. They believed in action not just words.

This was a government which stated clearly what it intended to do and then did it. They had said that they would beat inflation, reform trade unions, cut taxes, support the police, and strengthen the country's defences, and they had done so. They had said they would defend Britain's interests by diplomacy and negotiations and even by force of arms if need be and had done so.

Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, had fought hard to conceal, not to change, the extreme left-wing nature of his programme but had failed, Mr Tebbit said.

About the Labour Party they could at least say that they knew what they stood for and indeed saw them putting



Mr Tebbit making his policy speech at the conference yesterday. "We said what we intended to do and then did it."

it into action, not least in Labour town halls. Mr Kinnock was shifting ground on defence.

It was not just London where the left was a problem but in Leeds, Wakefield, Manchester, Bristol, Southampton and Brighton, Mr Tebbit said. It was a growing problem which would not go away.

Mr Kinnock had said he would deal with militants but after a few expulsions most Militant supporters were still in the Labour Party, including two MPs.

"While the voters will not give Mr Kinnock the key to

Ridley's pledge on municipal services

Rates and the quality of local authority services would be priority targets for a Conservative government after the general election, Mr Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State for the Environment, told the Central Council at Torquay yesterday.

He said those services together with the quality of education, housing and the state of the inner cities caused the greatest public concern.

The Conservatives were firmly committed to abolishing the "unfair and outdated" system of domestic rates and replacing it with a fairer community charge.

He said: "We will legislate for England and Wales in the next session of Parliament."

"The new system will be introduced in 1990 and we are considering how to reduce the transitional period until the new system takes over."

"We cannot go on allowing Lib-Lab councils to charge exorbitant rates on employers - losing jobs and driving

Mr Ridley confirmed yesterday the amount of rate support grant for local councils in 1987-88, after Parliament approved the Local Government Finance Act 1987 and the Rate Support Grants Act 1987.

The settlement will give grants totalling £12,842 million to local authorities in England and joint boards - an increase of more than £1,000 million on this year's settlement.

them away - either to low spending. Conservative-controlled areas in the South-east or away altogether."

Mr Ridley was replying to a motion calling for the speediest possible completion of rate reforms.

It was moved by Mr Michael Stern, MP for Bristol North West.

Mr Ridley said the Government could not continue to be blamed for the distress and odium of municipal socialism and the pressures for development in the South-east as the "refugees come south."

A Tory government would legislate to compel local authorities to offer more services to competitive tender.

He said Liberal, Labour and Lib-Lab councils could not resist municipal empire building.

WORLD SUMMIT

UK

ONLINE

Rome angered by vasectomy ruling

WORLD SUMMARY

US approves first anti-Aids drug

Washington — The first drug shown to prolong the lives of Aids sufferers won federal approval yesterday for prescription use in the United States (Christopher Thomas writes). Zidovudine, better known as AZT, does not offer a cure, but clinical trials last autumn convinced officials that it does prolong life and reduces symptoms among some Aids patients.

It is already being given to 4,500 patients, despite some serious side effects, under a special treatment plan approved by federal authorities on the strength of earlier promising clinical trials. The Food and Drug Administration said the approval marked an important step in the war on Aids.

Travel papers deal

British travel documents issued to Hong Kong's 5.5 million people will continue to be recognized for seven years after the colony reverts to Chinese rule in 1997. (Our Diplomatic Correspondent writes).

Talks on travel papers were concluded yesterday when China agreed to respect the so-called "document of identity" issued to those Chinese who have not lived in Hong Kong long enough to acquire "belonging" status.

HONG KONG: Last-minute sticking points over nationality have prevented the announcement of an agreement with China on the future of the Portuguese territory of Macao, according to local sources (David Bonavia writes). A speedy resolution is expected.

Ciskei jail sentence Hunters accused

Johannesburg — A Frenchman was sentenced to four years in prison yesterday in the Ciskei black tribal homeland for refusing to testify in a terrorism trial (Michael Horsfield writes).

Pierre-Andre Albertini, aged 27, was sentenced by the Supreme Court in Bisho, the capital of Ciskei, which under South African law is an independent state. He had been called to testify as a state witness in a case involving five blacks charged with terrorism, possession of arms and harbouring terrorists.

Nairobi — Kenya wildlife officials are investigating an allegation that a group of Arab tourists has been shooting wild animals in the Masai Mara Game Reserve (Alastair Matheson writes).

Local tour operators and conservationists claim to possess evidence that the group has been hunting illegally.

According to a report in the local Standard newspaper, the Arab party has killed a rare black-maned lion, a cheetah and other animals in the reserve within the last 10 days.

Duvalier assets frozen

Washington — President Reagan has signed an executive order freezing the assets in the United States of Haiti's former President, Mr Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier, left, and his family, who fled the country and settled in France in February last year (Christopher Thomas writes).

Most of the Duvalier assets in the US, estimated at about \$5 million, are thought to have already been moved out.

UK cool on treaty

Britain yesterday followed the lead of the US and France in refusing to commit itself to a treaty making the South Pacific a nuclear-free zone, in contrast to the Soviet Union and China which have done so (Our Diplomatic Correspondent writes).

Although not eligible to sign the Treaty of Rarotonga, Britain had been under pressure from Australia, New Zealand and other members of the South Pacific Forum.

Duffy death verdict

Bozler, Montana — A man aged 19 was found guilty yesterday of killing the parents of Patrick Duffy, a star of the television series Dallas (Reuter reports).

Kenneth Miller faces the death penalty for his role in the killings of Terrace and Marie Duffy last year in the bar they owned here. Another man has yet to be tried.

Rome angered by vasectomy ruling

Rome — Italian surgeons will now be able to perform vasectomies without risking arrest and possible 12-year jail sentences, according to an important ruling by the Supreme Court. The move is sure to bring an angry response from the Catholic Church, which opposes male sterilization because it is a form of contraception.

The vasectomy ruling ends a long odyssey for Dr Giorgio Concianni, a gynaecologist who has been trapped in a legal quagmire.

The abortion law of 1978 removed all penal repercussions on men who voluntarily sought sterilization, but physicians who carried out the operation could still be convicted and jailed.

Dr Concianni was accused of having caused, through vasectomy, severe physical damage to 50 men, and was sentenced to a year's imprisonment.

The Supreme Court has now overturned this sentence, saying that "the crime of vasectomy does not exist" provided it is performed on somebody aware of his actions.

Dr Concianni, a former head of the Italian Information Centre for Abortion and Sterilization (Cisa), declared: "This ruling drastically reduces the power of those many religious, political and judicial elements who try to stop the liberalization of Parliament."

The Supreme Court thus appears to have given clearly in the face of Vatican teachings

and already Catholic groups have begun to signal their discontent.

Their main complaint is that the court was using the reasoning of radical women's groups who demanded the right to abortion.

Although the vasectomy decision is the most important in legal and ethical terms, ordinary Italians are probably most affected by another judgment on a doctor who refused to treat a woman on the point of giving birth.

The case began when a heavily pregnant woman arrived at a hospital one evening and asked for assistance. Her waters had broken but the surgeon on duty refused to deliver the baby saying that he was not an obstetrician.

The doctors' association supported him, though in the view of many Italians it reflected the excessively bureaucratic approach of the medical profession.

The Supreme Court has now ruled that the doctor was in the wrong. "Specialization cannot be used as an excuse to refuse assistance to a person in need."

The doctors, however, are far from happy. Signor Eolo Parodi, president of the Physicians' Federation, said: "We must be careful in requests for assistance that go beyond our specific competence."

"We indisputably have a duty in cases of emergency but nobody should use us to cover a lack of medical and paramedical staff."

Kremlin crackdown on vodka causes moonshine headache

From Christopher Walker Moscow

A sudden increase in illegal moonshining similar to that which swept the United States at the time of Prohibition is threatening to sabotage the effects of the crackdown on vodka drinking introduced in 1985 by Mr Mikhail Gorbachev as the lynchpin of his reform programme.

A nationwide survey conducted by correspondents of the official daily, Sovetskaya Rossiya, disclosed that the anti-alcohol campaign was being "seriously undermined" by an upsurge in the brewing of samogon, a home-made spirit with a very taste and potentially lethal effects.

The paper discovered that the samogon boom was causing widespread shortages and thefts of sugar, an essential ingredient. There were also stories of fires caused by exploding samogon stills and drunkenness in factories.

Like its distant and purer Irish cousin, poteen, samogon was essentially a rural phenomenon before the Kremlin's crackdown. But Soviet officials have now confirmed publicly that its manufacture has now moved into towns and cities in the feverish struggle to find vodka substitutes.

"Last year, more than 130,000 samogon brewers were put on trial and found guilty. The spread of this evil is growing in many regions of the country," explained Mr Alexander Vlasov, the Soviet Minister of Internal Affairs. "In the not too distant past, samogon brewing was typical for rural areas, but now around 40 per cent of the cases are registered in towns."

The minister revealed that since the start of Mr Gorbachev's anti-alcohol campaign, the militia had registered 90 cases of group poisoning from alcohol substitutes, as a result of which 200 people had died.

"The samogon epidemic is dealing a harmful blow to the economy," Mr Vlasov added. "Valuable products — thousands of tons of sugar, beetroot, potatoes and grain — are being wiped out."

According to official statistics, 50 per cent of samogon brewers are blue or white collar workers in town or country enterprises, and 61 per cent are women. Whereas old women were once the typical moonshiners, the average age is now dropping, with 52 per cent of those sentenced under the age of 29.

As well as causing severe shortages of sugar, the upsurge in moonshining has also led to the virtual disappearance of yeast from Soviet shops. Foreigners are now frequently approached with requests for supplies from abroad.

Although the vodka shortage has produced nothing like the American speakeasy, Sovetskaya Rossiya reported that one woman, named only as B. Borisova, ran an inn which was flooded at night to attract tipplers from all around the district. In the nine months before being convicted, she distilled 400 litres of the illegal liquor.

In the Kursk industrial region, 2,000 kilos of sugar were seized from workers attempting to smuggle it out of the sugar factory where they worked. One woman, who sold home-brewed spirit illegally at the local railway station, was discovered to have 1.5 tons stored in her home after her arrest.

Mr Vlasov admitted that the militia were "not very well prepared for the upsurge of samogon brewing". He said that in spite of this, the number of those put on trial for illegal moonlighting had more than doubled since the introduction of the anti-alcohol laws, and 2.6 million litres of the lethal brew were destroyed.

President passes test as agents tackle Contra cash quagmire

Reagan, take two, without gaffes

From Christopher Thomas Washington

After an anti-climactic press conference that produced no shocks, no gaffes and no embarrassment, White House advisers are confident that President Reagan is on the road to a political recovery, barring any new damaging revelations from the Iran-Contra fiasco.

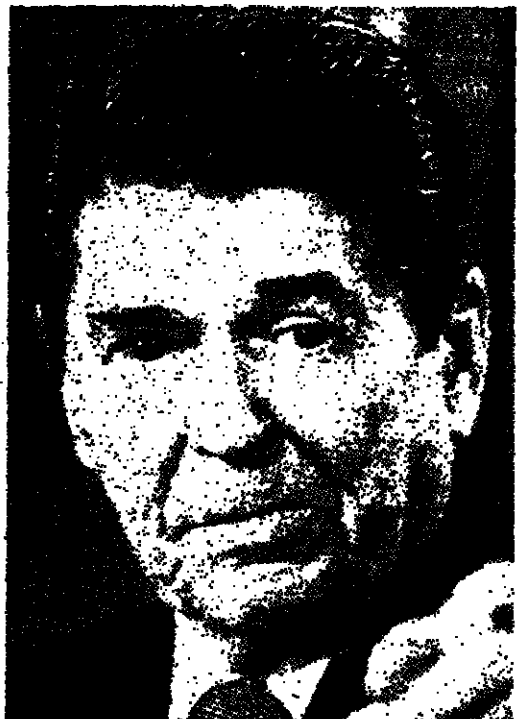
Mr Reagan received widespread approval from Republican leaders and even from many Democrats for the way he fielded sharp questions about the Iran arms sales affair. He said adamantly: "I would not go down that road again." And he insisted that he still had no idea where all the money had gone from the profits on sales of the weapons.

What he said was far less important than the way he said it. The press conference was seen as a test of his style and competence rather than an assessment of the substance of his answers. The general reaction was that he succeeded in dispelling doubts about his competence and that his popularity ratings will probably move up.

Mr Reagan prepared for the press conference for two days. On the day itself he held two dress rehearsals in the White House film theatre, with officials posing the questions they thought the press would ask. His advisers then suggested where he should modify his answers.

While not fed a full text of suggested replies, he was given comprehensive notes, which he carried with him into the East Room for Thursday night's press conference. He glanced at them repeatedly. He started somewhat nervously, but quickly got into his stride and left an impression of a man now fully engaged in the issues.

Some of the old fire was gone, although he did let loose a few one-liners, mostly barbed ones directed at the press. Long-time Reagan observers thought he lacked some of the previous magic, but all agreed that it was a good performance compared with the fumbling, confused one he gave at his last press conference four months ago. He began with a routine



Three faces of the Presidency from Ronald Reagan at the White House: a glare for the press, frustration at their questions, and some tart remarks.



statement about the budget. Of the 29 questions asked, 21 directly or implicitly questioned his credibility and competence. He also ably fielded questions on the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, acid rain and dependency on foreign oil.

He twice took the offensive when he suggested that the media were responsible for much of the political trouble

Some of the old fire had gone, but all agreed it was a good performance

he is in; his decline in popularity with the American public was not surprising, given "what they've been hearing and reading".

In another aside aimed at the press, he said he would not tell falsehoods because he would "leave that to others". He said that, although he had not believed initially that he was trading arms for hostages, Iranian representatives had seen an opportunity to extract more weapons from the US in return for the release

of the American captives in Lebanon. But he refused to say that the policy was wrong from the outset. "If I hadn't thought it was right in the beginning, we never would have started it," he said.

"I will keep my eyes open for any opportunity for improving relations and we will continue every legitimate means of getting our hostages back."

He looked surprised when asked if Mr Jimmy Carter, the former President, was carrying a message from him to Syria on his current tour of the Middle East. "No," he said. Asked if Mr Carter was making any effort to get the hostages out, Mr Reagan added: "I don't know. I wouldn't be surprised if he was, and I'd be grateful if he did."

He reiterated that he could not remember when he had authorized the arms sales to Iran, and strongly defended his "management style", which the Tower Commission had criticized.

He said he decided on policy and left people to do their jobs without continually looking over their shoulders.

Iran arms dollars 'fuelled corruption in Honduras'

From Alan Tomlinson, Tegucigalpa, Honduras

US investigators tracing millions of missing dollars diverted to the Nicaraguan Contras from Iran arms sales profits could find the trail leading them into a quagmire of official corruption in Honduras.

Much of the money, along with millions more in US economic aid to Honduras, went into the pockets of dishonest officials and crooked army officers, according to a senior official in the present Government and a former armed forces chief.

Their allegations could cause further embarrassment to the Reagan Administration as it struggles to rescue its Central American policy from the fallout of the Iran-Contra scandal.

Honduras has been the centrepiece of President Reagan's strategy to contain the Sandinistas in neighbouring Nicaragua. Over the past five years nearly a billion dollars has been pumped into the country to bolster its struggling economy and strengthen its ill-prepared Army.

In return, the Hondurans

have played host to thousands of American troops on training exercises and allowed the US backed Contras to use bases near the border.

But according to the Honduran Vice-President, Señor Jaime Rosenthal, his country's co-operation with US objectives has come at a high price. He charges that nearly a

third of US economic aid in recent years has disappeared because of corruption. His allegations, aimed primarily at the preceding administration of President Roberto Somoza Córdova, have caused consternation within the present Government, which has proclaimed its own innocence vigorously.

US officials here, while they do not deny that corruption exists, say they have no specific evidence of funds being diverted illegally.

Vice-President Rosenthal, unrepentant in the face of a barrage of criticism for his remarks, responded: "To fight corruption you must first denounce it." He is not alone in doing so. A former chief of the Honduran armed forces, retired General Walter López, alleges that senior military officers also made fortunes at the expense of the US.

He gave details of one such backdoor payment of \$450,000 (£281,000) in American aid, made to the Contras through the Army at the time he was its chief in 1985. The money was passed on to a Honduran businessman, who provided the Contras with supplies.

The businessman, Señor Rodolfo Zelaya, later fled the country in fear of his life after police fired at his home, in what he alleged was the result of fighting within the security forces over their cut of the proceeds.



Baker restores confidence to demoralized White House

Mr Howard Baker, the new White House Chief of Staff, is beginning to reassemble a shattered presidency, coaxing a demoralized President Reagan out of seclusion while managing to calm a jittery and protective Mrs Nancy Reagan.

The White House is more confident and Mr Baker has raised the drawbridge. The great conciliator and communicator just might pull off a recovery from the Iran fiasco in the twilight months of this embattled Administration.

Congressmen are finding the Oval Office door open once again, and they are tickled to be there. They are gathered upon the long white sofas discussing the ABM Treaty, Star Wars, trade and welfare. But for the arrival of Mr Baker three weeks ago, they would still be at the door, shut out of the dark and Machiavellian White House of Mr Donald Regan, his disliked predecessor, who was ignominiously booted out.

Mr Baker is now stroking the snarling Republican conservatives who suspect him as a raging moderate, and who might yet turn on him. They do not fully trust a man who does not belong to the conservative club, especially when people keep calling him the co-President or Prime Minister, or even the first President of the post-Reagan era.

Senator Jesse Helms and others on the right have spent hours with him over the past few weeks, seeking and getting assurances that he will follow the Reagan doctrine, not dictate it. Former Senator Paul Laxalt, a right-winger and President Reagan's close friend, mounted a telephone barrage to fellow conservatives asking them to lay off Mr Baker for now. They agreed. It is honeymoon time.

Mr Baker has no counterpart in modern America. No Chief of Staff has ever had such a well-defined political constituency of his own. He was one of the most successful leaders of the Senate, a job he

Washington View By Christopher Thomas

relinquished to seek the presidential nomination. He was about to announce his candidacy when his President's cry for help came. If Mr Reagan recovers some of his past glory, Mr Baker will be a political hero.

Which begs the question: could he become President in 1988 without having to tread the snows of Iowa and New Hampshire, without fighting a single primary? If he does rescue the Reagan White House, could he emerge as the saviour of a stalemated

questions, but back in his office he told Mr Martin Fitzwater, the White House spokesman: "I don't want to do that again."

The change Mr Baker has wrought in Mr Reagan is already apparent. A few days before Thursday's press conference the President surfaced on the nightly TV news, ending a long and conspicuous absence. There was the old Reagan again, striding to the microphone on the South Lawn, the text of his eloquent speech gripped firmly in his hand. He welcomed the rescued Soviet seamen with that old twinkly-eyed grace, and it seemed like the good old days before his world caved in last November.

Mr Baker meets the President every morning at 9 am in the Oval Office to discuss issues, ideas and strategies. These encounters under the Donald Regan regime were dreary, pointless discussions of staff arrangements. Mr Regan is now on the lecture circuit at \$22,000 a speech, aside from planning a money-spinning book. "I didn't realize what a sad place the White House had become," reflected Mr Laxalt.

With the lifting gloom, there is hope. The President is no longer shielded from diverse points of view. For the first time in a year, he attended a legislative strategy session last week and shared in the discussion among senior advisers on tactics to be followed on a Democratic-controlled Capitol Hill.

Mr Baker says he has been speaking to some of his Chief of Staff predecessors in the hope of getting valuable tips on his job, but has come away empty-handed.

"It's so different, every President is so different," he mused. He said he spends a good part of his day "padding back and forth" to the Oval Office and insists he has given up his own dreams of occupying it. But then they all say that.



Mr Baker: no counterpart in modern America.

Republican Party at the national convention? It is a long shot, but not inconceivable.

Mr Baker is riding atop a media bubble, but he tries to avoid excessive exposure on television, aware that he is the kingmaker, not king. It would be disastrous if it was thought that he was running the President.

Television crews did manage to corner him as he walked along the colonnade between the White House residence and the West Wing a fortnight ago after sending Mr Reagan off to Camp David by helicopter. He answered a few

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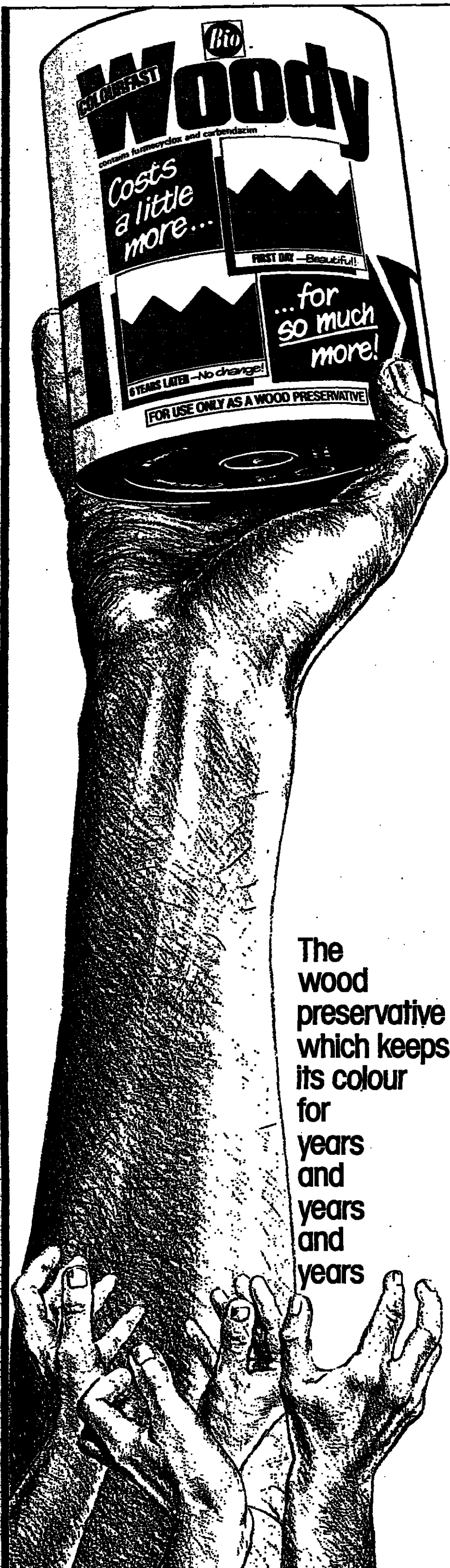


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Hostage success earns plaudits for Assad

Kidnappers free a second Saudi

From Our Own Correspondent, Beirut

The Syrians staged another political coup in west Beirut yesterday by extracting a second Saudi hostage from the hands of his kidnappers, a feat immediately greeted with official Saudi applause for President Assad.

Shaking with emotion but smiling, Mr Khalid Deeb, aged 23, was produced at a press conference in Syrian military headquarters by Colonel Abdul Salam Darghaftani, one of the most senior officers on the staff of Brigadier-General Ghazi Khamis, the commander of Syrian troops in Beirut.

Syria's latest coup will place the Saudis even more in President Assad's debt - perhaps literally - and will again raise hopes that Western hostages may enjoy the good fortune of the two Saudis who have gained their freedom this week.

There are growing rumours in Beirut that a foreign captive may be released when former President Jimmy Carter arrives in Damascus at the weekend.

Mr Deeb was tentatively vague about the identity of his kidnappers. He said that he was kept blindfolded during his 54 days of imprisonment and had no idea who his captors were.

He did reveal that his kidnappers had told him he was being held "because of the Islamic summit that was taking place in Kuwait". The summit, at which Arab leaders discussed the Gulf war, was bitterly criticized by Iran.

Mr Akel Hamieh, a senior official in Mr Nabih Berri's Shia Muslim Amal militia, was also on hand to enjoy Mr Deeb's praise, the second occasion on which the Syrians have allowed their Amal allies to share the laurels of a kidnapping release.



Students from Beirut University College signing a 150 ft-long letter of support received by the wife of Mr Jesse Turner, one of the US hostages, from his hometown in Idaho.

Soviet role suspected as six are held for spying on Ariane space project

From Diana Geddes, Paris

Six people charged in Rouen on Wednesday with passing on secrets about the Ariane European space rocket to an unnamed foreign power were probably spying for the Soviet bloc, M Frédéric d'Allest, president of Arianeespace, the European consortium which operates Ariane, said yesterday.

The six included two women - a Russian and a Romanian, Antonetta Manole. "One may suppose that their nationalities provide the explanation for the origin of the spy network involved," M d'Allest said.

A seventh person, the husband of the Romanian, is still being sought by the police.

The Russians are believed to be particularly interested in the highly sophisticated cryogenic technology, involving a rocket engine propelled by liquid hydrogen and oxygen, which is used in the third and last stages of the Ariane rocket. They are apparently hoping to use such a system in their next rocket launch.

The Americans were the first to master the cryogenic technique. They were followed by the Europeans, China and Japan. India and Brazil are also known to be eager to acquire the technology.

M d'Allest ruled out yesterday any link between the latest spy scandal and the failure of the last Ariane launch at the Kourou space centre in French Guiana in May. That failure was entirely due to technical problems and had nothing to do with sabotage, he said. The next Ariane launch is due in June.

It was revealed yesterday that one of the six people charged in connection with the affair, Jean-Michel Hauray, aged 54, had recently had a temporary job working at the Vernon centre of the Société Européenne de Propulsion (SEP), where the Ariane rocket motors are made.

Three others, Michel Fleury, aged 36, Pierre Verrier, aged 31 - both graduates from the elite Polytechnique Engineering University - and Mme Manole, worked for the French National Statistical Institute (Insee). M Verrier's Russian wife, Ludmila, has also been charged.

The sixth accused is a journalist, Philippe Maillard, who began working a month ago as a freelance reporter for the economics section of the right-wing *Le Figaro* newspaper.

He had previously worked for various other financial publications where he had earned a reputation as a hard worker and a first-class journalist. He is the only one of the six accused to have been released on bail.

The arrests came after more than a year of investigation by the French counter-espionage service, the DST. No details about the scale or seriousness of the affair were available yesterday.

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Athens ignores church land pleas

From Mario Modiano, Athens

The Greek Government, brushing aside the vigorous opposition of the Orthodox Church of Greece, vowed yesterday to press on with legislation to strip the monasteries of vast land holdings and bring valuable church property in urban areas under its control.

The controversial draft Bill was approved by a majority at parliamentary committee level on Thursday night. The Government will now take it to the full chamber, where the ruling Socialists have a comfortable majority.

Archbishop Seraphim, the Greek Primate, and a delegation of five bishops, called on President Sartzetakis yesterday and appealed to him to block the Government's move.

But the President argued that the revised constitution did not give him the power to intervene, and he urged the prelates to challenge the legality of the Bill in the courts, rather than resort to what he described as "illicit acts".

He was alluding to a series of vigorous measures adopted on Thursday by the hierarchy, the assembly of the country's 78 bishops, in an angry response to the Government's initiative, which they saw as a

manoeuvre to end church self-rule.

The bishops' plan of action includes the immediate distribution of monastic land to "poor and landless or impoverished farmers and those with large families" to pre-empt the new law, which would transfer it to Socialist Party-controlled farm co-operatives.

The bishops also decided to embarrass the Government by boycotting traditional church services to mark Greek Independence Day on March 25, and to hold a mass protest rally soon in Athens as part of a plan to win international support for their fight.

Impatience threatens Trinidad reforms

Robinson losing popularity

From Jeremy Taylor, Port of Spain

Three months after its landslide election victory in Trinidad and Tobago, the National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR) is struggling to retain its popularity.

The Prime Minister, Mr Arthur Robinson, has found no shortage of things to reconstruct since his 33-3 victory on December 15 dislodged the People's National Movement (PNM) after 30 years of uninterrupted power. His problem is that such a massive mandate for change has left little room for patience. While the NAR finds its feet and invents its own political systems, popular frustration at the slow pace of change is beginning to threaten the party's whole reform programme.

Mr Robinson argues: "I don't think there is any precedent where a government has been in power for 30 years in a Third World, newly independent country and you have had a peaceful transition such as we are trying to achieve." Particularly, he adds, when the government has been in power for 30 years in a Third World, newly independent country and you have had a peaceful transition such as we are trying to achieve.

But with ministers totally absorbed in the problems of transition, and with little time for the dialogue and discussion which the NAR stands for, there is growing impatience with all the talk about difficulties and a clamour for solutions.

The Government has already clashed with the public service over pay and alleged lack of support for its programmes. It has swept away the boards of all 67 state companies and is still struggling to find replacements, and there was widespread criticism of its handling of the

outgoing President, Mr Ellis Clark.

The NAR's main challenge is a virtually empty Treasury, a mere five years after the end of an oil boom unprecedented in the Caribbean.

Mr Robinson managed to produce within a month a budget which balanced the current account and even offered some mild tax concessions.

But, to avoid retrenchment in the large public service, which swallows up half the recurrent budget, he removed the £50-a-month cost of living allowance enjoyed by public servants, and at once found himself besieged by demonstrations as furious as any faced by the PNM. Last week the Government backed down and restored the allowance for at least lower-paid workers.

Mr Robinson has also tried bravely to tackle corruption. He introduced legislation to enforce integrity in public life and announced a commission of inquiry into a list of controversial PNM projects, including a purchase of aircraft for the national airline, several building projects, drugs, firearms, prostitution and the PNM Government's relations with the Tesoro Petroleum Corporation.

Last week, *The Wall Street Journal* obligingly retailed a story about Mr Robinson's PNM predecessor, Mr George Chambers, being provided with a blonde New York prostitute at Tesoro's expense, at a time when Mr Chambers was Finance Minister and certain tax problems threatened Tesoro's Trinidad profits. The commission is to include Mr Louis Blom-Cooper, QC, whose investigations in the Turks and Caicos Islands last year hastened the fall of that colony's government.

Mr Robinson also tabled in Parliament the year-old report of a commission of inquiry into drug abuse, which the PNM Government had refused to publish. The report showed that Trinidad and Tobago had become a big market in its own right, as well as a staging post on the trafficking routes from South America to the United States as several other Caribbean countries are.

The report named dozens of prominent figures. It painted a picture of the police commissioner's flying squad carefully tipping off the targets of narcotics squad raids, drug barons having senior policemen transferred and drug cargoes being escorted by police and soldiers. Many of those named have denied involvement and threatened legal action.

But the failure of the commission to assemble hard evidence, and the understandable reluctance of witnesses to testify in court, only added to popular frustration, and the NAR is being accused of abusing individual rights by naming people without being able to charge them.

Palestinian camp a wasteland of ruins

From Robert Flak, Beirut

After four months of besieging the Palestinian camps in west Beirut, the Shia Muslim Amal militia appears to have achieved something not accomplished either by the Israelis or their Phalangist militia allies - the virtual destruction of the Palestinian Chatila refugee camp.

The camp is now a wasteland of grey ruins and dust, with scarcely 5,000 people still living in basements and alleyways. The neighbouring camp of Sabra is deserted.

From the road running parallel to the two camps, where up to 1,000 civilians were murdered by Israel's Christian militia allies in 2½ days in September 1982, not a single Chatila building appears to be left standing. Crumpled walls and sagging roofs pizazz with the scars of thousands of shellbursts and rifle bullets are now all that remains of the camp, once home to 14,000 people.

In a small corner of the Chatila camp, just visible from the road which runs between the Kuwaiti Embassy and Bir Abed, it is just possible to see the overgrown acre of earth in which hundreds of the 1982 victims were buried.

As many as 1,500 Palestinians, most of them civilians, have died in the war between the PLO and Amal that engulfed Sabra, Chatila and the Bourj al-Barajneh camp in May 1985. Most died in indiscriminate shellfire rather than cold-blooded killings, but the death toll is now 50 per cent higher than that in Chatila 4½ years ago.

Repeated ceasefires are still broken around the camps, into which food is now regularly being taken by the United Nations, because of the continuing battle intermittently fought out at Magdouché, a Christian village 30 miles south of Beirut in the hills above Sidon, which was captured from Amal by the PLO last year, and which

has since changed hands at least three times.

The collapse of a truce in the hilltop village, from which the Palestinians can dominate the main road between Beirut and the Shia Muslim towns of southern Lebanon, inevitably causes further fighting around the Beirut camps.

A Lebanese employee of the UN Relief and Works Agency, which cares for Palestinian refugees, died two days ago when his lorry, carrying food into the wreckage of Chatila, was hit by a mortar shell. No one knows who fired the round, though Amal is the most likely culprit. The lorry can still be seen perched on the edge of an enormous crater.

Four Israeli jets yesterday bombed Palestinian targets near the south Lebanese port of Sidon, in the first such attack this month (Reuters reports from Sidon).

The raid lasted more than three minutes and smoke was seen billowing over the Darb al-Sim area, a few miles from Sidon. Residents said ambulances rushed to the scene but full details were not immediately available. Heavy anti-aircraft fire was reported, waterlogged shellhole, surrounded by buildings so pockmarked by sniper fire that the walls have crumbled away.

The appeals for a truce by Mr Yasser Arafat, the PLO chairman, are still unheeded, not least because both Amal and its Syrian sponsors know how little international credit he now has to his name.

But for the Syrians, at least, the camps may have their uses. If the war continues, it may provide an excuse for them to enter Bourj al-Barajneh which, besides the Palestinian camp, also contains the area controlled by Shia Muslim extremists who hold many of the foreign hostages in Beirut.

The Syrians, after all, are past masters at imposing ceasefires to their own benefit.

ALLIANCE LEICESTER

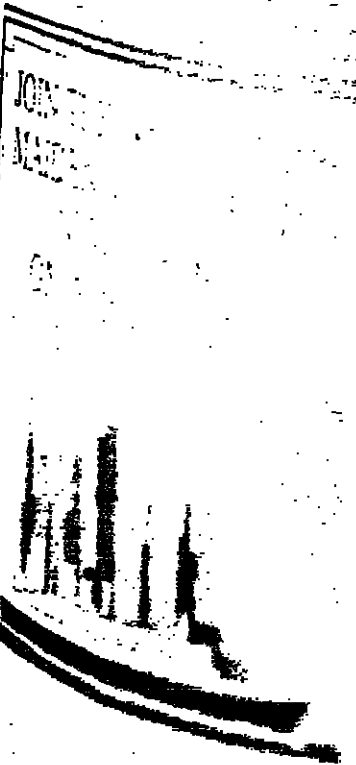
ADOPTION OF NEW POWERS Notice of holding of Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of Alliance & Leicester Building Society will be held at the Society's Oadby Administration Centre, Oadby, Leicester LE2 4PF, on Wednesday, the 15th April 1987, starting at 6.00 p.m.

Full details of the Resolutions being proposed together with explanatory material and a proxy form are contained in a booklet prepared by the Society. Members who wish to obtain a copy should apply to the Secretary of the Society, Mr Mervyn Griffiths, at our Hove Administration Centre, Hove Park, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 7AZ.

Indian state will measure in Gandhi's

Repentant Praga tackles



2

Indian state elections will measure decline in Gandhi's popularity

From Michael Hamlyn, Delhi

From the deep south to the far north, and from the Bangladesh border in the east to the ceasefire line with Pakistan in the west, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, the Indian Prime Minister, has been flying this week in pursuit of votes.

On Monday he faces an important test of public opinion at a time when most observers agree that his standing is at a record low point. In the absence of reliable opinion polls, taking the political temperature of the country can be hazardous, and as a result the state elections are likely to provide the nearest there is to a referendum on Mr Gandhi's rule.

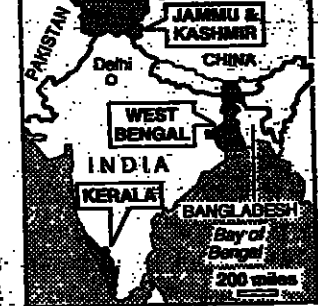
The polls are to be held in three states — Kerala, Jammu and Kashmir, and West Bengal. They can each tell something about political and social trends after two years of Mr Gandhi's rule.

In Kerala and West Bengal, for instance, Mr Gandhi's Congress (I) Party is facing a Communist-led coalition of left-wing parties, but the curious thing about the Communists is how middle-class they have become. Political commentators have pointed out that the old revolutionary fire of the Communists has virtually died.

In 1957 they were elected to power in Kerala on the strength of a programme of land reform and nationalization, but today they face the electorate with the same leader, Mr E.M.S. Namboodiripad, now aged 82. The party's programme would credit to Britain's Social Democrats.

In Bengal the Communist Party of India (Marxist), which dominates the Left Front Government, is led by Mr Jyoti Basu, aged 72, whose party first came to power in the state 18 years ago and has held on with increasing firmness ever since.

Today, observers insist, the Bengal Communists are relying more on their organizational cohesion and the strength of the cadres in the villages to fend off Congress's challenge than on any dramatic new initiatives.



Apart from this, the three state elections are focusing sharp attention on the communal and caste forces which divide Indian society. In Jammu and Kashmir, Mr Gandhi's party is in alliance with the National Conference, the party founded by Sheikh Abdullah, the late Lion of Kashmir, and presently led by his son, Dr Farooq Abdullah. The alliance is presented as the force for secularism, and indeed represents the non-fundamentalist, non-chauvinist strands in the state. They are opposed by parties

with a strong commitment to religious ideology. In the Muslim-dominated Kashmir Valley a coalition of fundamentalist parties, the Muslim United Front, has put up candidates in all 40 seats. MUF candidates have been calling for the electorate to "vote for Islam, to save Islam".

In Jammu, where Hindus form the majority community, the Bharatiya Janata Party, generally supported by Hindu chauvinists, is leading the opposition.

While Mr Gandhi may present himself as the voice of secularism in the far north, in the deep south in Kerala his party leads a coalition which represents some of the worst forms of communalism. Each party in the coalition represents some vested interest. There are two specifically Christian factions, another party representing the interests of the Nayar caste of Hindu warriors, and one for the more backward Ezhavars. The Muslim League represents the communal aspirations of the fifth of the state's population who follow Islam.

Party alignments have changed rapidly over the years, and perhaps Mr Gandhi could have been forgiven when he thought he was attacking the CPI(M) government and said they had made a "terrible mess" of the state finances. He neglected to note that the Finance Minister under both the Communists and the Congress was the same man, Mr K. Mani, of the Kerala Congress.



South Korean riot police firing tear gas in Seoul yesterday to disperse about 700 students calling for an uprising to topple President Chun's Government. Witnesses said students hurled petrol

bombs and stones in a three-hour battle with more than 1,000 riot police who blocked the main gate to Seoul National University (Reuters reports). The police detained about 130 students who tried to

enter the campus, the witnesses added. A student leader said students from 13 universities were urged to gather at the university to launch a student league aimed at organizing an uprising.

Success of science 'Woodstock'

Physicists herald electronic revolution

By James Gleick of The New York Times

New York — No sooner was a breakthrough announced than it was obsolete, and only the coming of dawn on Thursday ended what participants called the most extraordinary scientific meeting in memory.

Physicists from three continents converged on the New York Hilton for a hastily scheduled special conference on a string of discoveries which seemed certain to produce a rapid cascade of commercial applications in electricity, magnetism and electronics.

The doors opened early on Wednesday evening to a roar, a blur of colour and a stampeding abandonment of professional dignity. Within three minutes, the crowd had filled all 1,200 seats, and nearly 1,000 more physicists jammed the aisles and pressed against the walls. Outside, hundreds more queued to get in.

Several scientists called it the "Woodstock" of physics. "It's a phenomenon — there's never been anything like it in the history of physics," said Professor Theodore Geballe of Stanford University.

The fast-breaking research on superconductors, materials which carry electricity without any loss of energy, has overwhelmed the ability of scientific journals to keep up with it, and the meeting, called by the American Physical Society, brought "some incredibly exciting results," as Dr Neil Ashcroft, the chairman of the society's division of condensed-matter physics, said in opening the meeting.

"What we're seeing here is one of the most exciting developments in decades," he said. "It's utterly remarkable,

and I think there's more to come."

The reason for the excitement is the discovery of materials which carry current with no loss of energy whatsoever at record-high temperatures, as high as 92 kelvins (a degree equivalent to the Celsius degree, with zero at absolute zero), or as low as minus 294 deg F, temperatures that mean the difference between the impractical and practical.

Before the breakthroughs, superconductors were a multi-billion-dollar business, but they were limited to applications which justify the enormous expense of cooling the

materials almost to the physical limit. Now, with a host of everyday applications in sight, scores of laboratories around the world have joined the effort to understand the materials, to discover new ones and to turn them into shapes which can be used in technology.

Dr K. Alex Müller, of IBM's Zurich laboratory, announced the development of a superconducting thin film for electronics "which has been done over the weekend." Dr Bertram Batlogg, of AT&T Bell Laboratories, stunned the crowd by revealing a washer-size semiconductor ring and then pulling out of his pocket, wrapped in notebook paper, a sheet of wide tape made of the material, like vinyl to the touch.

Amid the intensity, the jostling, "the madness," as one theorist said, the audience strained to see chart after chart of technical data. Then, giving in to the revival-meeting fervour, Dr Batlogg set aside his graphs and said simply: "I think our lives have changed," and the hall erupted with shouts and applause.

Among the developments announced at the meeting, in some cases by scientists telephoning their laboratories to get the latest data, were:

● Several laboratories have found at least eight new materials, all relatively easy to make, which share the ability to become superconducting at

Some of the discoveries announced by scientists:

- Materials which carry electric current with no loss of energy at extreme temperatures.
- Magnetic fields greater than any yet found on Earth.
- New superconductors could make possible electric motors one-tenth their present size.

around 90 kelvins, or minus 298 deg F.

- Real-world applications have progressed more quickly than expected. Speakers described magnetic fields greater than any yet found on Earth, and prototypes of electronic circuits which would operate at high speed and without generating heat.

● The discovery of yet another compound, particularly surprising because it contains a magnetic metal, gadolinium, ordinarily known to prevent superconductivity — was reported by researchers from the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico.

Some scientists continue to urge caution about predicting quick success for the new materials, but most were highly encouraged by the flood

of new findings. Measurements of crucial properties have improved weekly, particularly the ability of the superconductors to handle large magnetic fields. Questions remain, however, about their ability to carry large amounts of current.

Some suggested that billions of dollars in energy costs could eventually be saved by superconducting transmission lines and energy storage devices. Such devices would be gigantic coils which would store electricity in the form of magnetic fields.

Other applications of the superconductors include such things as advanced magnetic imaging machines for medical diagnosis and levitated high-speed trains supported by magnets. The powerful magnets and increased efficiency of superconductors could make possible electric motors one-tenth their present size as well as supercomputers.

Professor C.W. Chu of the University of Houston, who discovered the first material that becomes superconducting at 90 kelvins, said: "All these applications will involve a major change in the infrastructure of our society." Many more applications will become possible if the critical temperature can be raised to room temperature, and Professor Chu said he believed room temperature was possible.

Applications aside, the breakthrough in superconducting poses a challenge to the fundamental theory of physics. The present highly successful understanding of superconductivity seems to break down completely when it comes to explaining the new materials.

Repentant Prague tackles pollution

From Richard Bassett, Prague

The countries of Central Europe are rarely united politically. But with acid rain in northern Hungary, lignite despoiling Polish waters, and forests dying in Bavaria and Austria, they know where to point the accusing finger environmentally.

Czechoslovakia is seen by all her neighbours, both east and west, as Europe's foremost exporter of pollution. Until recently Prague closed ranks behind a wall of aggressive recrimination. Far from exporting pollution, the Czechoslovaks — so the official line went — were actually importing it from their neighbours.

Last year, however, after the Chernobyl accident, a new air of reality was detected in attitudes towards environmental problems. Western diplomats were impressed by the candour of the radiation statistics issued by the Prague Government in the wake of the disaster.

Then, in the autumn, figures were published for the first time in an official paper which warned the country's industrial leaders that Czechoslovakia's ecological future was in their hands and that unless drastic action was taken quickly the country would suffer irreparably.

The statistics had an apocalyptic ring. Air pollution, which already affected 30 per cent of the Czech lands

and 16 per cent of the Slovak areas was dramatically on the increase.

Soil degradation, wrote Mr Josef Vavrousek, the distinguished Czechoslovak ecologist, was a time bomb critically endangering 54 per cent of the country's agricultural land. Outdated lignite mining methods were partly to blame.

The annual damage, worth 20,000 million crowns (£1,400 million) to the economy, would be compensated by increased government spending. It was pointed out, however, that 100,000 million crowns would be spent on the environment by the year 2000. The use of lignite to produce electricity would be phased out as the country stepped up its civil nuclear programme.

Leadable though the frankness and new measures are, even officials remain sceptical that such steps are sufficient.

"More money is desperately needed" is a complaint heard frequently among Czechoslovaks. Even more important, some say, is the need for international co-operation. A start was made last autumn at a meeting with West German environmentalists in Carlsbad, in one of Bohemia's most afflicted acid rain areas. A joint environmental protection programme has also been concluded with Hungary and Austria remain-

Pay freeze enrages Yugoslavs

From Dossa Trevisan, Belgrade

For the first time since the Communists came to power in Yugoslavia, the Government is facing opposition from workers, factory management, union leaders and the party itself. They are all against the Government's new economic policy, which involves a wage freeze or, in some cases, as much as 50 per cent reductions — compared with last December.

Since then, prices have continued to rise steeply; yesterday, for example, the price of bread went up by 20 per cent.

The first wave of strikes, mainly in the republic of Croatia, seem to have receded, but a second is expected after the end of the month when some four million Yugoslavs will find themselves with a smaller wage packet.

The Government is under pressure from all sides, but the Prime Minister, Mr Branko Mikulic, who has a reputation for strong nerves, went ahead with his programme despite the obvious discontent and the risk of labour unrest.

His Finance Minister, Mr Svetozar Rikonic, told a press conference this week that the Government does not intend to back down, nor does it contemplate resigning. He said that the country cannot go on spending what it does not earn.

Anticipating the Government's wage freeze, many Yugoslav businesses increased salaries by far more than the rate of inflation, which was above 90 per cent last year, and is expected to exceed 100 per cent by the end of this year.

Union leaders have demanded a review of the new wage legislation, while the party leaders have criticized the Government on the ground that the new law was hurriedly prepared.

Australia's lone stand on UN Nazi archives

From Zoriana Pysariwsky, New York

Australia is now understood to be the only member of the former United Nations War Crimes Commission that wants secret UN files on Nazis made public.

An attempt by Israel to have the UN open its extensive Nazi war crimes files to the public has been rejected by Señor Javier Pérez de Cuellar, the Secretary-General, after extensive consultations with the 17 governments which were members of the commission.

The archives, detailing charges against more than 25,000 suspected Nazis, and containing the names of thousands of witnesses, came to public attention after it was

revealed that they included a file on Dr Kurt Waldheim, the former UN Secretary-General who is now President of Austria.

A UN spokesman yesterday said that only one member of the commission, which was established in 1943, favoured changing the rules restricting access to governments. That member is understood to be Australia.

Other members, including Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union, took the view that the files had not undergone any judicial review, and would thus break the rule of confidentiality and run contrary to the intentions of the commission.

García woos Peru capitalists

From A Correspondent, Lima

President García of Peru has made a reputation for himself as a left-leaning dissident in international affairs and world economics.

Domestically, however, he is breaking out of that mould by making a direct appeal to the country's capitalists to join him in his efforts to reshape the nation and prevent a financial collapse. His political viability hinges on his creating a smooth, efficient relationship with private business.

Since mid-1985 Peru has applied a selective moratorium on servicing its \$14.4 billion (\$9.1 billion) foreign debt, alienating its creditors and setting a dangerous example for other debtor countries.

Faced with diminishing prospects of international assistance, the country's only remaining source of capital is Peruvian business, which is already nervous because of political violence, kidnappings and sudden changes of policy.

The Government's arguments to win business support have been twofold: to reverse Peru's three-year domestic



President García trying to clear financial bottleneck, recession and to open new channels for dialogue and co-operation.

Economic growth last year was a spectacular 9 per cent of GDP, among the highest in Latin America. Government officials now predict that this year's figure will be a healthy 6 per cent.

Señor Daniel Carbonetto, the chief presidential economic adviser, says: "Businessmen are going to believe the Government's intentions when they look at the bottom line of their balance sheets." But to find this recovery the Government has been financing imports out of foreign exchange reserves.

International reserves now stand at about \$800 million, approximately half of what they were a year ago. Finance officials give assurances that the country can weather the next 12 months without problems but critics counter that in early 1988 Peru's economy will be strangled by a shortage of foreign exchange to buy essential imports.

Even the confirmation that Royal Dutch Shell found a huge deposit of natural gas — the equivalent of double Peru's proven petroleum reserves — in the Amazon jungle last month will not change Peru's precarious condition in the short term. A pipeline will have to be built to transport the 7,000 billion cubic ft of gas over the Andes to the Pacific coast.

Señor García said that it would take three years, assuming that the Government reaches a quick agreement on a new contract with Shell. The President staked his own political standing by calling together 12 of Peru's most prominent businessmen last year for private talks on future prospects. About \$500 million worth of new projects have been put on the table.

UK visa office in Lagos reopens

Britain's visa office in Lagos was reopened yesterday five weeks after being abruptly ordered to close by Nigeria (Andrew McEwen writes).

Talks in London between Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, and Mr George Dove-Edwin, Nigeria's High Commissioner, found middle ground between Nigeria's objection that crowds of visa applicants were disrupting traffic and Britain's refusal to transfer the visa work to the British High Commission.

The answer was to make applicants report to the High Commission first, then bus them to the visa office in numbers small enough to avoid congestion.

Airline strike

Brussels (Reuters) — Belgium's national airline, Sabena, cancelled 14 of its flights from Brussels's Zaventem airport as employees entered a second day of strikes over wages.

Arrogant boss

Moscow (Reuters) — Mr Viktor Boyko, aged 55, the Dnepropetrovsk regional Communist Party leader, was sacked recently in the Ukraine because he "preferred a bureaucratic, desk-bound style" to active work and had become increasingly arrogant.

Death sentence

Monrovia (AFP) — A circuit court in north-eastern Liberia has sentenced Benjamin Morris, aged 32, to be hanged for the murder of Mrs Elisabeth Senter, a US Baptist missionary, and her 10-year-old daughter.

Ice trap

Helsinki (Reuters) — About 50 vessels have been trapped in ice off the coasts of Finland and Sweden by strong south-easterly winds in the worst Baltic ice conditions for more than 30 years.

Tribesmen die

Dhaka (Reuters) — More than 900 tribespeople who fled to India to escape a separatist tribal guerrilla war in southern Bangladesh have died of diarrhoea, dysentery and malaria, *Dainik Bangla* reported.

Fatal punch

San Cristóbal, Venezuela (AP) — Police believe a 60-year-old man laced the punch at a retirement home lunch with a powerful insecticide that left eight people dead and 117 critically ill.

Off the map

Ankara (Reuters) — The *National Geographic Magazine World Atlas* has been banned by the Turkish Government, possibly because it refers to Armenia and Kurdistan.

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SPORTING DIARY

Simon Barnes

Head before wicket

Most sports, and especially cricket, have long been a happy hunting ground for the amateur psychologist. Now, as sport everywhere gets more professional, so we see the professional sports psychologists marching in, not one but two first class counties are planning to employ a professional sports psychologist next season. They are Somerset, the county that has suffered a nervous breakdown, and Glamorgan, the chronic depressive of first class cricket. I feel confident that this season will prove that psychologists can improve performances: after all, the two counties can only go one way. They finished bottom and next to bottom in the county championship last season. Both will probably work with Sporting Bodymind, which lists Spurs among its clients.

Do unto others

After the mass suspensions of England's handbag-swinging rugby players this week, a quiet word from Barry Morrison, vicar of St Luke's, Hampstead, who formerly played for Cambridge University, London Scottish and Bristol: "Being competitive and Christian, hard but fair, playing with fury and for fun - a very narrow tightrope. Sunday playing training, public given to dirty play and moves towards making payments only increase these pressures. My biggest problem was being obstructed... Once a famous Scottish international opponents was guilty, and I administered 'divine' retribution - a short, sharp blow to the solar plexus. He appealed to the ref, to be told: 'I know you and I know him. And he's a minister, and he wouldn't have hit you unless you had done something wrong.' There's something for the Welsh to ponder."

Rite wingers

A band of Italian wizards is doing its best to bring the league title to Napoli and their chunky captain, Diego "Hand of God" Maradona. The wizards began seven days of mystical rites on Wednesday to wipe out any obstacles to Napoli's winning the league title. Among the obstacles is a Peruvian magician who, they say, has been employed by several opponents to halt Maradona's lads. Napoli's wizards sprinkled incense before giant posters of their Argie wonder, however, several spectators expressed their reservations by throwing stones and rotten fruit. Napoli, by the way, give points in front with the points to whom both the leader and the citizen are committed and with whom they simultaneously share a kind of union. Typically the name of the country is invoked as if it were a person, beloved, demanding, often threatened by outsiders.

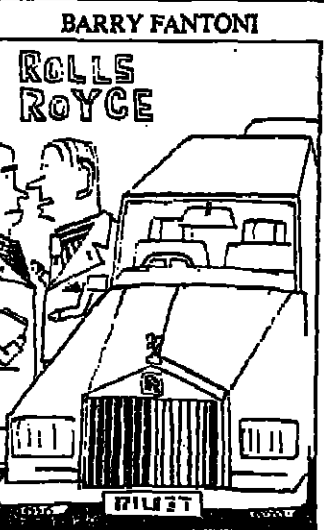
For the statesman, the exercise of power in such a context requires that he be in step with both national history and, by extension, national destiny. Policy goals are defined in keeping with the normal rhythm of the nation's historical experience. Even acute historical discontinuities, such as revolution, eventually tend to become assimilated into the hidden logic of national history. They come to be seen as phases of renewal. But until that happens a revolution in nationally conscious peoples tends also to be extremely unsettling, generating both bitter struggles between alternatives and mutually exclusive concepts of what the nation is, has been, and should become. But that conflict, too, is about the "true" meaning of national history.

Playing the field

The cricket transfer system gathers momentum with each passing season and it is not just Ian Botham who is involved. The 1987 *Cricketers Who's Who*, just published, notes that the transfer pace is hotting up. Graham Stevenson has left Yorkshire for Northants; Neil Mallender has left Northants for Somerset; Graham Dillie has left Kent and Botham Somerset - both are off to play for the Worcestershire All Stars. The book also lists the players' relaxations, and what a pleasure it is to learn that Jonathan Agnew plays the tuba. This must be tough for his roomie. Another player lists his relaxations as "music, photographs, beaches, vintage port and crossword." Yes, that's David Gower, obviously at his most Goweresque.

Bookish

The self-restraint of the gambler? A new novel about racing, which goes straight into paperback and this lady's thighs on the cover, burst upon us in this Cheltenham Week. Jamie Reid, author of *Easy Money*, who has the racegoer's romantic view of villainy, boasts that he placed his first bet at the age of five, but that marriage has slowed him down. "I don't think I am a maniac about it. If I am not actually going racing I try not to bet. Unless it's a weekend. Or a big meeting..." The man is an example to us all.



"The only sound you can hear at 95 mph is the government writing off the £283 million debt"

Neil Kinnock will not be looking for converts when he steps off Concorde later this week for his third and most crucial visit to the United States since he became Labour leader.

His trip last December, when not a single Democratic politician came forward to aver public support for his party's non-nuclear defence policy, was enough to confirm that there will be no sympathy when he sees President Reagan and other senior figures in the administration. Reagan will accept Britain's right as a sovereign country to take its own decisions about its defence; but he will exercise America's right as an ally to say how disastrous he believes Labour's plans could be.

The question to which the Americans still want an answer is this: how can Kinnock claim to be a wholehearted supporter of Nato, while subscribing to a policy they believe would lead to its disintegration? But the Kinnock who enters the Oval Office on Friday will, in the eyes of American policy-makers, be a different Kinnock from the inexperienced, largely unknown opposition leader they first encountered in 1984. They will be talking to a man who in only three months could be presenting himself as Britain's alternative prime minister. As such he and his policies will merit, and be accorded, the most serious consideration. Kinnock, wearing the international statesman's hat, will first go to New York to deliver a call to a prestigious gathering of industrialists and financiers for a new Bretton Woods agreement, a co-ordinated international plan of expansion.

His aim on defence, as on the last trip, will be to achieve understanding of Labour's position. If it managed nothing else, the December visit at least assured many Americans that a Labour government was not set on expelling the Americans from Britain forthwith. This time, for the benefit of both his American and British audiences, the aim will be to underline his Nato commitment to achieving international arms control deals and to

Philip Webster shows how things have changed since December's chilly response - though the rift on defence remains

Why Kinnock will fare better in America

strengthening the conventional defence of Europe. Kinnock's last trip was presented in Britain largely as a failure, a verdict which he and his team vigorously disputed. Since then many of his senior colleagues have been voicing the private hope that he would not return; nothing could come of it; better to plead pressure of the impending election and pull out. By the end of last week that view had changed. Because, although the leadership is loath to admit it, so has Labour's position in the four months since he was last there. He will not be going empty-handed.

First, only days after his return, came the official launch of Labour's defence policy. Kinnock then went back on his rejection of the American nuclear umbrella only two months before. He said that Nato's "flexible response" strategy, including the potential first use of nuclear weapons, would be subscribed to until the Nato allies could be persuaded of the need for change.

He stressed that the closure of American nuclear bases in Britain would not be subject to a time limit. While this would technically be possible within 12 months, the politics would take longer. "Everything we do will involve consultation with our allies," said the document. Labour's non-nuclear policy was being presented as an objective rather than a fact of life.

Then last week came the amplification of Labour's position on cruise, ironically agreed between Kinnock, Denis Davies, shadow defence secretary, and Denis Healey, shadow foreign secretary, but not disclosed before. James Callaghan gave another reminder of how damaging Labour's defence differences can be. The missiles can stay while the superpowers are talking about a deal to remove intermediate forces. Kinnock will tell Reagan. Although Labour sources were maintaining with justification that there had been no change in policy and that the position was totally consistent with Labour's long-held support for a zero-zero option, the spring in the step of some Shadow Cabinet multilateralists on the day it was disclosed told a slightly different story. If there had been no change in policy, there had been a big change in the way that policy would be perceived at home and in Washington.

None of that will totally satisfy Reagan, but the changes in the nuances of the policy, if not the policy itself, will be welcomed as signs that Kinnock would be prepared to adjust his strategy to the realities of the situation should he win power.

Meanwhile he is prepared this week to go on explaining. He will attempt to persuade Reagan that, while he may not be able to swallow the whole loaf of Labour's policy, there are slices that should

be palatable. In Boston in December he emphasized that of the 135 US military facilities in Britain, only a few will be closed.

Kinnock will clearly differentiate between the systems that make up the nuclear defences based in Britain. The submarine-based Polaris will go. If there is no arms agreement in sight, further deployment of cruise will be stopped and "discussions" will take place about the removal of those already here; if an agreement is in sight, they stay for the time being. On the Holy Loch submarine base, Kinnock will argue that the Poseidon submarines will be phased out in any case as the C4 and D5 missiles enter service. Most difficult of all, Kinnock will say that the Fills at Upper Heyford and Lakenheath should have conventional roles only. His case will be that holding them back for use in a nuclear war would mean they could not be used in a conventional role. But in all the talks about American weapons the watchword will be "no stopwatch."

"Discussions" are still not yet "negotiations" but there are many in the Labour hierarchy who believe they could be by the time the election manifesto is written.

Mistakes were made on the last trip. Relations with the British press corps were poor. Organization on the ground could have been improved. Mayor Andrew Young let Kinnock down with that first badly attended meeting in Atlanta. This time Kinnock will have a stronger private office team with him. His chief economic adviser, John Eatwell, is already in America smoothing the arrangements. A public relations firm has arranged exhaustive coverage, including coast-to-coast television. And this time there will be Denis Healey.

The Americans have long wondered how a charismatic, modern leader like Kinnock could have taken on the (to them) hard-braided unilateralist policies of an older Labour generation. The presence by his side this week, sinking or swimming with him, of the old Atlanticist will convince Reagan that Kinnock is in earnest.

John Clare

The real science slackers

One reason for the parlous state of science in Britain is illustrated in a disturbing report just published by the school inspectors. It also explains why so many parents are worried about sending their children to state schools.

The inspectors sat in on 200 science lessons involving more than 7,000 pupils, aged between 12 and 14, at 13 secondary schools in inner London. They concluded that 15 per cent of the lessons were good, 30 per cent satisfactory, 40 per cent less than satisfactory and the rest "unrelievedly bad". In other words, 110 of the lessons were sub-standard, a situation they describe as "a matter for concern".

In these circumstances the excuses usually trotted out by teachers' leaders and other members of the education establishment are a shortage of qualified teachers; schools starved of resources; a lack of in-service training; not enough books or equipment; too many pupils per class. No one, however, in this case. The Inner London Education Authority spends more per pupil than any other in the country. Accordingly, the inspectors found that nearly three-quarters of the science teachers concerned were trained graduates, most having qualifications in physics, chemistry or biology. Most science departments had a "good proportion of experienced staff" and the in-service training on offer was "extensive".

In every school, the provision of science resources was "either good or excellent", all were well provided with laboratories, all had libraries of science books, the range and quality of which in some cases was "outstanding". Most had access to computers and all had a sufficient number of qualified technicians.

More than 80 per cent of the classes contained fewer than 26 pupils; indeed, more than half had 20 or fewer - reflecting, the inspectors remark, "the favourable circumstances in which science teaching takes place". And yet "Over 50 per cent of the lessons had some unsatisfactory features or, to put it another way, around 4,000 pupils were getting a very poor introduction to science."

There can be no doubt, where the fault lies: the teachers, quite

simply, are not doing their jobs properly. Many of them, it becomes clear from the report, are bad teachers; others are plain idle. Some, the inspectors found, did not prepare their lessons, with the result that their experiments went wrong; others, even though they knew they were being inspected, showed little enthusiasm for their subject.

Some teachers seemed to expect little of their pupils. They did not help them with their work; they did not even correct it when it was wrong. "For example," the inspectors say of one lesson they observed, "the method used to compare the heat production of two fuels was so crude that excessively divergent results were obtained."

"In one case the difference observed by one pair of pupils was 40 times that of another, using the same materials. No surprise or concern was expressed by the pupils at this variation; they had low expectations of the techniques used in their science lessons. There was no attempt to determine the causes of error."

The inspectors reserve their severest criticism for the teaching styles they observed: an over-reliance on work cards, little use of the elaborate equipment provided; ill-disciplined and aimless class discussions; little revision of ideas or consolidation of work; too little emphasis on developing scientific skills; pupils rarely given a chance to suggest or plan experiments; no attempt made to relate science to the children's daily lives; too little allowance made for the spread of ability in the class.

The inspectors do not take long to describe the consequences of this appalling litany. "In almost half of the schools interest in science declined, in some cases as early as during the first year, and certainly by the time pupils had reached their third year". The inspectors add that in nearly all the schools they visited, the proportion of children opting to study science after the age of 14 was below the national average, "sometimes substantially so".

The ILEA is sending a copy of the report to the head teachers of all its secondary schools and to the head of every science department. It deserves a very much wider circulation than that.

Peter Brimelow

When everyone is Irish

New York. On one day every year many New Yorkers decide that it's prudent to stay indoors and communicate only by telephone. Unlike the Children of Israel in Pharaoh's Egypt, they are not leaving the streets outside to the Angel of Death but to the somewhat less steady progress of the annual St Patrick's Day parade.

More than 100,000 marchers took part in last Tuesday's event, watched by a million spectators. There was little of the alcohol-induced rowdiness evident in some recent parades, but it was still a great day for Manhattan's innumerable Irish bars. As night fell and the Empire State Building was bathed in its special green St Patrick's Day floodlights, the city's traffic was still hopelessly jammed.

These Irish bars are one of the few signs that New York was once effectively an Irish city. The Irish are still an important voting bloc but now comprise only about 6 per cent of New York State's population. By comparison, Italians make up about 11 per cent and wield much more political power. Many old Irish neighbourhoods have long since become black or Hispanic, although the Irish Republic's recent economic troubles have produced a new transfusion of immigrants that is reviving some fading districts.

The tradition of the parade, however, is remarkably tenacious. One Wall Street I know marched with some 80 members of his family under the banner of the Irish county from which his forbears emigrated five generations ago. Then they all went back to the suburbs. Moreover, all Americans adore parades, and St Patrick's Day in New York has become remarkably ecumenical. The leaders of this year's parade were New York's mayor and police chief - Jewish and black respectively. The cafeteria in one Wall Street firm served green bags.

Similar subtle changes are apparent in the overall position of the Irish in America. Simply put, more than a century after the start of the great exodus from Ireland, its descendants are finally assimilating to the Yankee Protestant culture they found on arriving here.

One obvious indicator is the remarkable presence of Irish names that have appeared in the Reagan administration. They include the president himself, a chief of staff, Don Regan; a secretary of state, Alexander Haig; a labour secretary, Ray Donovan; a communications director, Pat Buchanan - and, perhaps, an entrepreneurial White House aide, Oliver North.

The Republican Party is still often dismissed as the party of small-town WASPs - white Anglo-Saxon Protestants. But in fact this growing Irish affinity for it has

been going on for years. As early as the 1960 election, for example, only the votes of the Jewish medical students prevented the campus poll at Jesuit-run Fordham University in New York from being carried by the Republican candidate, Richard Nixon - although his Democratic opponent was the man who would be the first Irish Catholic president, John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

No doubt, to some extent, this reflects socio-economic status. The average income of Irish-Americans is actually higher than that of WASPs, many of whom live in rural poverty in the South. There are many powerful Irish law firms and investment banks in New York, including Don Regan's, old employer, Merrill Lynch, the largest stockbroker in the country.

Income alone, however, is not a decisive guide to American politics. The Jews are certainly wealthier than the Irish, but they remain overwhelmingly liberal. Underlying this American form of Irish Republicanism is a significant convergence of values. At a basic level, this means that the Irish and the WASPs agree on the Reagan election themes of work and family, however trite they may seem to pundits. At a more sophisticated level, the single most important leader in American conservatism's intellectual revival since the 1950s has been an Irish Catholic, William F. Buckley, editor of *National Review* magazine.

The British are accustomed to thinking of the Irish as left-wing because that is where Irish political energies in Britain have generally been directed. The American experience suggests that this is an accident of history. Once the alienating effect of the argument over Ireland's institutions is removed, the two traditions can view each other in a wider context. And they find they are fundamentally compatible.

This, of course, is also indicated by the curious paradox that large numbers of Irish citizens live in Britain, vote in British elections and serve in Irish Catholic regiments in the British Army. This compatibility was demonstrated in the 1918 general election when a majority of Irish voters supported the moderate devolutionary political tradition that had succeeded in getting a Home Rule bill passed on the eve of the First World War. But the first-past-the-post voting system resulted in victory for the radical nationalists.

Today's Irish Republic is the radical nationalists' creation. But federation with the rest of the British Isles would more accurately reflect Irish cultural reality. The failure to achieve it is part of a classical tragedy, of which the current effort to coerce Ulster's Protestants to Dublin's rule is merely the latest, but not the least disgraceful, stage.

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The author is a senior editor of Forbes Magazine.

In the second of our occasional series on politicians and the influence of history, Zbigniew Brzezinski assesses recent American presidents

The role of history in statecraft is not only a matter of the statesman's personal interest. It is also a question of national consciousness. A people's historical consciousness shapes political attitudes, helps to define national priorities, and contributes to constancy in the exercise of national power. A nation motivated by a collective memory is often intractable but also more predictable; occasionally vengeful but also more trustworthy; often narrow-minded but more capable of endurance. Because it knows itself, it does not have to rediscover itself.

Political leadership in a historically conscious nation tends to identify itself with the nation's subconsciously endowed personal identity. The nation - its history and geography - is thought of almost as a person to whom both the leader and the citizen are committed and with whom they simultaneously share a kind of union. Typically the name of the country is invoked as if it were a person, beloved, demanding, often threatened by outsiders.

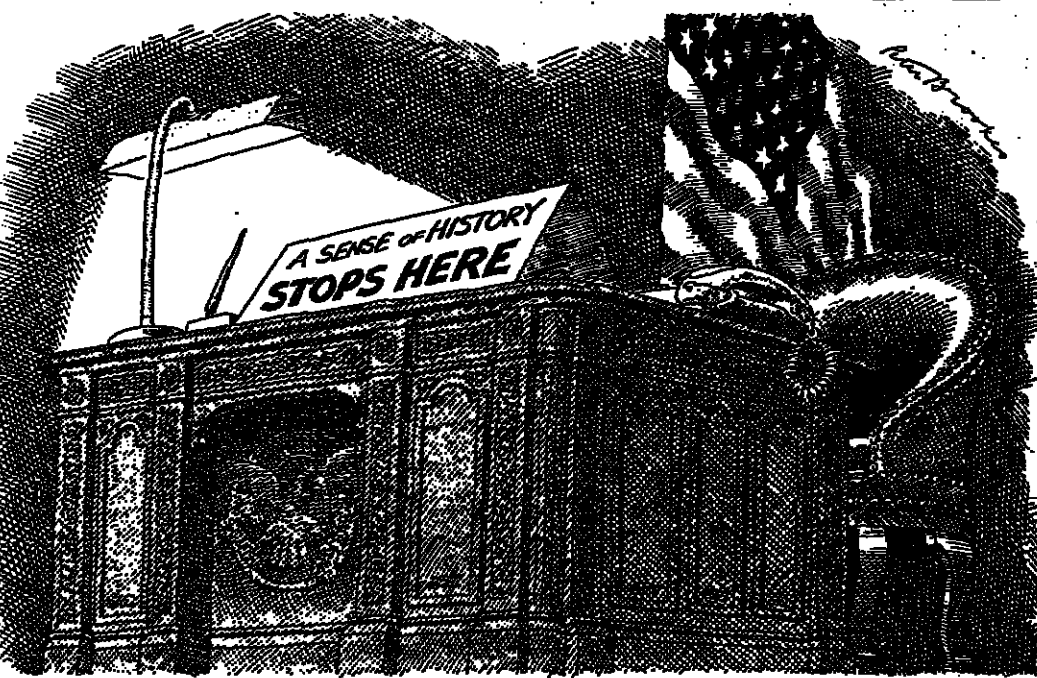
For the statesman, the exercise of power in such a context requires that he be in step with both national history and, by extension, national destiny. Policy goals are defined in keeping with the normal rhythm of the nation's historical experience. Even acute historical discontinuities, such as revolution, eventually tend to become assimilated into the hidden logic of national history. They come to be seen as phases of renewal. But until that happens a revolution in nationally conscious peoples tends also to be extremely unsettling, generating both bitter struggles between alternatives and mutually exclusive concepts of what the nation is, has been, and should become. But that conflict, too, is about the "true" meaning of national history.

To be sure, all nations are not equally motivated by history or possess an equally developed historical consciousness. Nevertheless, it would be difficult to understand the intractability of many contemporary regional issues without reference to history. Moreover, the historical dimension is certainly evident in such critical national decisions as the French determination to acquire its own national nuclear deterrent or in the growing internal problems for Moscow over the proper relationship between the Russian-dominated political centre and the non-Russian nations within the Soviet Union.

A historical consciousness also conditions both the leader and his people to accept the reality of conflict on the global scene as something quite normal. Hostility, competition, and prolonged contests for supremacy are not viewed as aberrations but as the manifestation of the normality of struggle in the human condition.

These general considerations highlight the unlikelihood of America being composed of a people united by a shared past, consciously perceived, but by a shared commitment to the future. America's own past is short, and much of its population does not identify itself emotionally with that past. To be sure, for the South the Civil War still has some waning meaning. I was impressed in talking to President Carter by how much that legacy still meant to him, not in the sense of hatred or bitterness but in the consciousness of a defeat inflicted on a way of life of which his own grandfather had been a part.

For most Americans, however, the 200-year history of the United States is not a personally intimate



A nation that lives only for the future

engagement with the past. Indeed, if most Americans were deeply involved with their personal national pasts, they could not be united, as they are, as a people. It is their shared commitment to the future that defines them as Americans. And that commitment is reinforced by a sense of historical optimism about the future and by shared concepts of what ought to be the proper relationship between the individual and the society and the state. It is not an accident that history and foreign geography are so badly taught in most American schools. Fascination with the past is not compatible with the dominant American outlook. Unity focused on the future, not derived from an emotionally shared past, creates the American consciousness, characterized by its rather unique historical amnesia and by its inwardly focused future orientation.

This broader context must be taken into account in addressing the question: what role has history been playing in the thinking of recent American leaders? My judgement must necessarily be impressionistic. I think it is useful to differentiate between three broad categories of historical influence: (1) the impact of contemporary history on the individual involved; (2) the actual interest of the individual in history as a subject in itself; and (3) the leader's direct personal experience as part of a learning process.

In the first category, one is dealing essentially with leaders whose personal participation in truly important events, or at least very close observation of such events, tended to shape their outlook on world affairs. One might quite easily place in this category President Eisenhower and President Kennedy, though obviously the level of personal experience differed a great deal from one to the other.

Nonetheless, the centrality of the war of the Vietnam experience in shaping President Eisenhower's outlook on the world is quite obvious, and conditioned a great deal of his attitude towards Europe, particularly Nato. Eisenhower's interest in arms control was also derivative of that traumatic experience. President Kennedy's "heroic" style was probably very much influenced by his admiration for Churchill.

In the second category, one would be entitled to place President Truman and, to some extent, President Carter. President Truman had a deep personal interest in history as a subject. He was an avid reader of Plutarch's *Lives*. One senses in his approach to decision making a profound respect for the institution of the presidency and a historically grounded awareness of what is meant by responsibility for the national commonwealth. President

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THE CASE AGAINST BAIL

The public outcry which followed the vicious killing of PC Keith Blakelock during the rioting at Broadwater Farm 17 months ago has been revived and redoubled with the disclosure that the man convicted of leading the attack was at the time on bail, awaiting trial for another killing. Inevitably, anger is now being directed both against the judge who granted Winston Silcott bail and against the 1976 Bail Act itself under which he was acting.

The judge who heard Silcott's application for bail, Mr Robert Lymbery QC, has defended his decision stoutly. He insists that he followed the law and did nothing wrong. He maintains, further, that he did not know he was dealing with someone who had already been acquitted of murder and, indeed, that it would have been wrong for this fact to have been made known to him. He is saying, in essence, that the Silcott with whom he was presented was not the hardened killer the court has now proved him to be.

Now judges are entitled to err on the side of caution as anyone else. The very qualities of discernment and judiciousness which qualify them to be judges are likely to predispose them in this direction, and that is all to the good. Yet because Judge Lymbery's decision now appears, in retrospect, to have been faulty and because he insists that there was legal justification for his action, it does not necessarily follow that the Bail Act itself is defective.

On the contrary, there is nothing in the Act that would have prevented Judge Lymbery from refusing bail if that was his judgement. Much as a trial proceeds from the assumption that the accused is innocent until proved guilty, the Bail Act proceeds from the assumption that the applicant

should be granted bail unless there are compelling reasons for refusal. But among those reasons are several that could have been invoked in Silcott's case.

A judge may refuse bail if he has substantial grounds for believing that the accused would fail to surrender to custody. Judge Lymbery says he had no such grounds. But bail may also be refused if the judge has reason to believe that the accused could commit another offence while on bail, or if he has grounds for believing that the accused might interfere with witnesses or try otherwise to obstruct the course of justice. On these points Judge Lymbery appears to be on more shaky ground.

Silcott's initial application for bail had been turned down in the magistrates' court because it was reported that there had been an attempt to interfere with witnesses. Judge Lymbery can argue against this first, that any attempt to suborn witnesses had been made while Silcott was in custody (so he could not have been the culprit), and, second, that any interference had already taken place, so releasing Silcott would make no difference. The suspicion that witnesses might be intimidated did, nevertheless, exist.

There was also the question of Silcott's criminal record. While the judge would not have been aware of the earlier murder charge (Silcott's acquittal meant that it would not have appeared on his record), he would have had information about his previous convictions. These included burglary, breach of probation, possessing an offensive weapon and malicious wounding—a steady sequence of crime over a period of eight years. A record of this nature may be no novelty to a bail judge; it should none the less

suggest a criminal liable to offend while on bail.

Judge Lymbery has argued that in making the decision to free Silcott, he took into account—as he is required to do under the Bail Act—the settled family circumstances of the accused and the consequent unlikelihood of his absconding. Such "community ties", as they are termed in the Act, however, can be set against the seriousness of the crime. Where the charge is murder, judges tend to refuse bail nine times out of ten. Silcott was therefore something of an exception.

The judge faced a difficult choice. He had to weigh Silcott's apparently stable background against his record. He had to weigh the possibility that witnesses had been, or would be, intimidated by Silcott against the likelihood that he would be acquitted for lack of evidence (whether as a result of intimidation or not). And he might have chosen to consider the effect on Silcott's status as a gang leader at Broadwater Farm if he was detained for months before a trial, only to be acquitted.

It now transpires that the police, who vehemently opposed Silcott's application for bail, were right and Judge Lymbery was wrong. He may have been too inclined to give the accused the benefit of the doubt or too receptive to the arguments of a barrister. Either way, it was a grievous error and one which had tragic consequences.

But it was an error of judgement, not of the law. The Bail Act stands; and if the precedent of Winston Silcott means that bail decisions are weighed more carefully in future, the consequences of Judge Lymbery's misjudgement may not have been all negative.

THE DEMISE OF MONETARISM

The Budget decision by the Chancellor, Mr Nigel Lawson, to stop setting targets for the broad measure of the money supply, sterling M3, draws a chapter of Britain's monetary history to a close. In its place exchange rate policy must bear a heavier burden—indeed, it is already doing so. It begins to look as though Britain may become a member of the European Monetary System *de facto* before it becomes a member *de jure*.

For 25 years after the war, monetary discipline was supplied by the fixed exchange rate regime set up at Bretton Woods. Britain's monetary policy was linked to that of the US via the dollar-sterling exchange rate, and the degree of fiscal expansion and the level of interest rates were largely determined by the need to "defend the pound". That all vanished when sterling was allowed to float freely against other currencies in the early 1970s. A period of disastrous fiscal and monetary indiscipline began, culminating in the arrival of the International Monetary Fund.

Britain, in common with many other countries, then embarked on a policy of setting targets for the money supply. Apart from Germany and Switzerland, continental countries have never taken these as seriously as the Anglo-

Saxon countries and the EMS rapidly emerged as the primary discipline in Europe. But in other countries the use of monetary targets continues despite manifest difficulties which have not only obliged Britain to drop its target for broad money but also the US its narrow M1 target.

In its latest formulation of monetary policy the Government says that "monetary conditions are assessed in the light of movements in narrow and broad money, and the behaviour of other financial indicators, in particular the exchange rate." Of these factors, the one which moves the policy levers most directly is the exchange rate. No explicit target range has been set for sterling—and, without the resources of other EMS members to help defend a rate, this is probably wise. But it is not difficult to define the broad limits of an implicit target range.

After the meeting of the Group of Seven, minus Italy, in Paris last month Mr Lawson said that he did not want to see any further fall in sterling, nor did he want to see a substantial rise. The pound was then trading at \$1.5283, Dm2.7914 and 69.1 in terms of the Bank of England's exchange rate index. The day after the Budget earlier this week the Chancellor said that he was quite

happy with the exchange rate where it was and indicated that his views on the appropriate rate were now "less lopsided"—in other words he was content to see no further rise, substantial or otherwise.

The pound closed on Wednesday at \$1.6076, Dm2.9543 and 72.6. This seems to indicate that the level sterling has traded at since the Budget, broadly in the area 72-72.5, may be Mr Lawson's preferred central rate in a range stretching from about 69 to 76.

No doubt this range is not very precise, even in the minds of the Treasury and the Bank of England. And it is wider than would be tolerated within the formal confines of the EMS. But the need to keep within the framework implied by the Paris communiqué, which called for a period of stability in exchange rates, is not a bad substitute for EMS membership.

By abandoning the sterling M3 target the Government has substituted an implicit commitment for an explicit target. At the same time, however, it has distinguished more clearly between its monetary policy and fiscal policy. This does not solve the monetary problem, but it at least makes for greater transparency in fiscal policy.

FOURTH LEADER

As we have so often had occasion to ask whatever next? The cry, even more anguished than usual, has been forced from us by the news that the Italian Communist Party has just founded a merchant bank. It is called Finec, and apparently the writing has been on the wall since 1985, when L'Unità began to publish the Stock Exchange prices; more such writing appeared in 1986, when the Party founded an insurance company.

I suppose we should have spotted what was coming when we saw the kind of suits worn by the late Signor Berlinguer; talk about parlour-pinks—Derek Hanton himself could hardly be smarter. Even so, it comes as something of a shock to find the biggest Communist Party in Europe taking a leaf out of the books of such extremely capitalist enterprises as Rothschilds, Warburg, Crédit Lyonnais and Banca Commerciale Italiana. What is more, we have more than a suspicion that the

profits will not be sent to Moscow to further the cause of international communist brotherhood; we don't recollect Marx saying "What we have, we hold", but for that matter we don't recollect him advocating the establishment of more merchant banks.

When western Communists turn men of business they tend to put business first; we do not suppose that Finec will put all its funds in the shares of firms supplying arms to the Contras, nor in such stocks as de Beers and Consolidated Goldfields, but we will bet anybody an enormous number of lire that the new bank will not be taking up any of the next issue of municipal bonds by Brent Council.

So far, we have heard of no moves by our own CP (whether in the Authorised Version or the Revised) to emulate their Italian comrades. During the recent great ideological struggle between the two rival persuasions, so reminiscent of the Awful Battle between the Pikes and

the Pollicies, one side called the other "maestri del Comunismo", presumably a scornful term indicating a lack of seriousness about the business of expropriating the expropriators; what do you suppose the "tankies" would say about the Italian Connection?

As for the Russians, *glasnost* or no *glasnost*, they must be having forty fits. It was had enough with Togliatti and his deviationism; it was much worse with Berlinguer and his Eurocommunism; but just imagine what they must be feeling at the sight of Natta and his monetarism. Well, it will be a test for Mr Gorbachov: will he denounce this flagrant example of putting commercial considerations before the party line, or will he come, capitalism in hand, for a loan from it? If he does, we advise the directors of Finec to demand the very highest rate of interest, and to refuse all suggestions that for collateral they should accept Lenin's tomb.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Protection of mentally handicapped

From Mr Michael G. Baron
Sir, Your leader (March 18), in its reference to the absence of an adult guardian for the mentally handicapped in our legal system, apart from the narrow class of guardians defined in section 8 of the 1983 Mental Health Act, is timely. Care in the community means that the handicapped who either cannot make decisions or can only make flawed decisions are, as you say, "legally vulnerable".

Medical treatment is only one aspect of the rights of the mentally handicapped. Other, no less important aspects, are "where to live", "whom to live with", "how not to be exploited", "where to get treatment for specific problems", "how to obtain and keep employment", and so on.

The rights of representation contained in the Disabled Persons Act 1986 (an Act without the resources to implement it) and advocacy schemes are surely not enough. These may be relatively inexpensive to administer but rely too heavily on volunteers. Neither Act nor advocacy schemes meet all the needs of those who need protection. Dependent adults—for that is what they are—must have others, either permanently or temporarily, to make decisions for them. That requires a court-based system.

France has had legally constituted guardianship associations since 1968; some 13 US States

have public guardianship statutes; Alberta has had a Dependent Adults Act since 1978 and, with a population of 2,500,000, had some 6,216 guardianship orders in existence in 1985. Victoria (Australia) passed legislation for a Guardianship Board in 1985. Some European countries use the device of the extended minority to continue parental powers, so that parents have rights in respect of their dependent adults.

Here, we have the Court of Protection with powers limited to property and money and matters linked thereto, and the 1983 Mental Health Act from whose limited guardianship provisions most mentally handicapped people are excluded.

Is it not time, then, giving more than a backward glance to the 1971 United Nations declaration on the rights of mentally retarded persons, that those concerned to shield the vulnerable without depriving them of their inherent rights came together to see whether, and if so how, guardians for the dependent adults should be appointed.

Yours truly,
MICHAEL G. BARON (member, Guardianship Working Party, Law Society's Group for the Welfare of People with a Mental Handicap),
Herbert Baron & Co.,
124 St Margaret's Road,
Twickenham, Middlesex.
March 19.

Garden marketing

From Mr T. H. B. Clode
Sir, Lord Droghda (March 10), as a past chairman of the Royal Opera House, has nobly done his duty in pressing for more Government funding for that august institution. However, the facts do not support his case. According to the Policy Studies Institute report, "Facts about the Arts", the total number of opera seats sold at Covent Garden, nearly 250,000, were bought by less than 50,000 people.

Far from being under-funded, this privileged minority are already being subsidised by the taxpayer at the rate of £200 per head and in spite of millions of taxpayers' money over the years opera attracts only 3 per cent of the population.

Government spending is pressured enough in keeping up with

the demands of the real world—health, education and caring for the needy—without having to pander to the wishes of an over-inflated few. The latter include some of the wealthiest individuals and corporations in the country who frequently use the Opera House not for artistic appreciation but as an extension of commercial entertaining.

Let them pay for this convenience, or their genuine interest in opera, out of their own ample pockets and if there is any spare funding for the arts from Government let it go to more deserving causes, like the theatre, which over 24 per cent of the population is interested in.

Yours faithfully,
T. H. B. CLODE,
Maison Douet,
Rue du Douet,
St Ouen, Jersey, CI.
March 10.

'Polarisation' rules

From Mr Michael Drewett
Sir, Whilst I commend the sentiments of John Butterfill (March 4) as to the theoretical benefits to the consumer investor of the principle of "polarisation" I have every doubt that the interests of the consumer will be served in the end.

As a "tied agent" I provide solutions to problematical situations for my clients, using the available services of the insurance company I represent. If, however, a client needs something my company cannot offer it seems I am doing that client a service by giving him or her access to the services of a different company.

This is especially relevant in the case of capital investment when, rightly or wrongly, a client is less than happy with putting "all his eggs in one basket". On the basis that the customer is always right he should be able to choose where his money is invested.

However, the imposition by a third party of a ruling that his choice can only be directed through fewer professional introductory sources must be a restraint of trade. I completely fail to see how my clients' interests will in future be seen to be served for the better.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL DREWETT,
164 Newera Mansions,
Warwick Road, SW5.

Offshore havens

From Mr H. P. Hall
Sir, Robin Oakley's article (March 6) states that a Labour government might consider the extension to the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands of UK legislation to bring them within the scope of certain aspects of company law.

The Isle of Man and the Channel Islands are, as he states, self-governing States with their own legislatures. They are not part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

If any Labour government attempted to legislate for them against their will, all they have to do is to apply to the United Nations for full sovereign independence.

There are now many sovereign States with smaller populations and less commercially viable than these islands and the United Nations would find it impossible to refuse their requests for complete independence.

Yours faithfully,
H. P. HALL,
Robina,
The Chase,
Ringwood,
Hampshire.

London traffic flow

From Mr Jeremy Hawksley
Sir, Dr Martin Mogridge's thesis (March 9) that road-building in London would reduce speeds flies in the face of the experience of many other Western conurbations which have accommodated vast increases in traffic, and separated that traffic from sensitive local environments, by building a network of modern roads.

His idea that there is an "equilibrium" in door-to-door journey times by car and train in London rests upon the assumption that the commuter to inner/central London is faced with

the option of either driving by car or taking the train. In reality, for most commuters either the car or train achieves a faster door-to-door journey time, generally depending upon how close is the home and the office to a railway station.

Average traffic speeds have certainly fallen, especially for roads in the sprawling inner city areas which surround the central core.

This decline of speed was gradual but continuous in the 15 years 1968-83, with only a slight upward movement, which was soon corrected, following the oil

Learning Latin in Londinium

From the Leader of the Inner London Education Authority
Frances Morrell, pract. schol. Lond. Carol Wilson salutem.
Asseveras (sententia, s.d. iv id. Mart.) scientiam linguæ Latinæ, quod nos nihil in vita expetendum putamus nisi quod sine labore comprehensum, apud iuventutem Londiniensem evanescent. Cum hæc nobis assignas, tum in nos contumeliam magnam iacis.

Nam quis dubitat quin iuventutis nostræ non solum labores faciles imponendi sint verum etiam graviores qui naturam eius colant ingenique acuant? Sed sunt alia præter linguam Latinam studia quæ non minus difficilia nonnullisque aptiora sunt.

Nihil tamen nos deterrebit quin occasiones linguæ Latinæ discendi in scholis nostris semper offeramus. Ut tibi omnem de hac re curam levemus, nunquam deerunt qui hanc in tabulariis vestris conservatam epistolam intellegere poterunt.
FRANCES MORRELL, Leader,
Inner London Education Authority,
The County Hall, SE1.
March 18.

Natural spelling

From Professor G. R. Sampson
Sir, Lord Simon of Glaisdale's advocacy of simplified spelling (report, March 5; letter, March 11) is based on an axiom which, while natural, is hard to defend scientifically. There is a considerable weight of psychological evidence suggesting that what makes a script easy to read has to do with visual distinctiveness of words rather than with regularity of sound/letter correspondences.

From that point of view the irrationality of English spelling has real advantages. A survey by the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit can be taken to imply that adult illiteracy in Britain is largely a matter of lack of motivation. It is notable that Japan, with an orthography incomparably more complex than our own, has one of the highest literacy rates in the world.

Yours faithfully,
GEOFFREY SAMPSON,
The University of Leeds,
Department of Linguistics & Phonetics,
Leeds, West Yorkshire.
March 12.

From Dr Edward Black
Sir, Pace my Lord Simon, it is perfectly natural for a young child to say *teached*, having internalised the general pattern. It is equally natural at a later stage to say *taught*, having internalised irregular forms by hearing them used, not corrected.

There is no need—or profit—for linguistic legislation by our lords and masters. In Israel alone has that had success. Let all the world's dialects of English simplify or complicate themselves according to the needs and wishes of their societies—naturally.

Yours,
EDWARD BLACK,
The London School of Economics and Political Science,
Department of Language Studies,
Houghton Street, WC2.
March 11.

From Mr Leslie W. Sayers
Sir, There are no fewer than seven different ways of pronouncing Mr Hough's (March 11) "dreadful" "ough" words, which Lord Simon of Glaisdale describes as "a notorious vagary". Vagary indeed, as the following colourful and alliterative mnemonic, containing all seven, which I was taught as a child by my mother, amply demonstrates:

A rough-coated dough-faced plough-boy strode coughing and hiccoughing through the streets of Scarborough.

Yours faithfully,
LESLIE SAYERS,
43 Cambridge Street, SW1.
March 11.

From Mr M. C. Bell
Sir, Might I suggest to Mr John Bort (March 11) that justification of "snow-plow" simply requires a little know-how?

Yours sincerely,
M. C. BELL,
1 Concorde Close,
Bexhill-on-Sea,
East Sussex.
March 11.

Type-casting

From Mr Martin Wright
Sir, Your readers have no doubt used that familiar sentence "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog" for some years now in order to practise their typewriting skills. I wonder if they know that this is not the briefest sentence available for this purpose.

My father has trimmed it down from the 35 letters in the sentence above to a mere 32: "Pack my box with five dozen liquor jugs".

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN WRIGHT,
22 Alexander Terrace,
Pinxton, Nottinghamshire.
March 11.

price increase of 1974. In this period there was a 25 per cent increase in car traffic in London, which largely explains the fall in average speeds.

It is partly because of this that the Department of Transport have commissioned consultants to study four road corridors of London, mainly located in the inner London boroughs.

Yours faithfully,
JEREMY HAWKSLEY,
Secretary,
Movement for London,
Conway House,
6 Portugal Street, WC2.
March 9.

ON THIS DAY

MARCH 21 1904

Holman Hunt's (1827-1910) second version of "The Light of the World" was exhibited throughout the Empire and other countries. It is now in St Paul's Cathedral, the only hanging picture there.
Ruskin's letter in The Times, recalled by the author of this piece, was published on May 5, 1884, and signed by "The Author of 'Modern Painters'".

MR. HOLMAN HUNT'S "LIGHT OF THE WORLD."

There are not many examples in history—indeed it would be difficult to point to one—of an artist who, having painted a masterpiece, has gone on living for 80 years and has then deliberately and successfully repeated it. Yet this is the achievement of Mr. Holman Hunt, and this morning the public are invited to the rooms of the Fine Art Society in New Bond Street to see the result. In 1854, at the Royal Academy, Mr. Hunt exhibited "The Light of the World," a picture painted during the three previous years, when he was not much more than 20 years of age. A few elderly people yet remembered the sensation which the picture caused, the disputes which raged around it. To many it was as heterodox in religious meaning as in artistic method; in both ways it proceeded upon a new convention, and it met, at the hands of the multitude, with the reception that anything too original is bound to expect. But to the few it seemed a great and striking thing, the thing that they had been waiting for in religious art; and their vague feeling found utterance in the eloquent words of John Ruskin. In a letter to The Times, published while the picture was on exhibition, Ruskin explained its symbolism, glorified its technical perfection, and pronounced it "one of the very noblest works of sacred art ever produced in this or any other age." The thinking portion of the world was easily converted, and the "Light of the World" or of the "Light of the World" had already been sought and won, and not even those who disliked this picture dared to apply to it the language that they had used a few years earlier of Millais's "Christ in the House of His Parents." It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader of the prodigious success which soon came to attend "The Light of the World," or of the vast circulation attained, during the 30 years that followed, by engravings and photographs of it. But the curious history of the picture itself must be referred to, because it explains the origin of the enlarged and very interesting replica which Mr. Holman Hunt has now painted. It was Mr. Combe, of Oxford, who bought the "Light of the World," and during his life it hung in his house, in company with many others of the finest works of the young Brotherhood. At his death, more than 20 years ago, his widow presented it to Kettle College, an institution with which she was in profound theological sympathy. But Kettle College did not treat the picture as the Light of the World, and apparently as Mrs. Combe wished—a little story which is told in some detail in the Note issued by the Fine Art Society, apparently with Mr. Hunt's authority. So the veteran artist boldly determined to paint the subject over again; which, of course, as he had apparently not painted with the copyist's spirit, he was quite at liberty to do. And here the new version is—life size, twice as large as the old one, and, we are glad to find, almost, if not quite, as finely painted as that, though the increased scale has made it necessary to use a larger brush and to adopt a broader style of handling. The numerous slight alterations in matters of detail will interest the curious; they may be seen by a comparison of the picture with the print of its predecessor hanging in the room. Certain changes in the folds of the robe, in the grass of the foreground, &c., may be noted; and there is one strange addition, which the artist seems to have made as a rebuke to the Kettle authorities, who are suspected of thinking the original picture too liberal in meaning. On the new lantern you may see painted the crescent and the star, as though to show that, in the painter's thought, the Divine message is for all the world, for Mahomedan as for Christian.

Not the least interesting fact with regard to this new and very fine picture—by far the finest that Mr. Holman Hunt has painted during the last quarter of a century—is its destination. It has been acquired by Mr. Charles Booth, who intends to send it on exhibition round the Empire, and finally to present it to one of the National Galleries. This is at once a highly original and most laudable way of promoting Imperial unity...

A rough-coated dough-faced plough-boy strode coughing and hiccoughing through the streets of Scarborough.

Yours faithfully,
LESLIE SAYERS,
43 Cambridge Street, SW1.
March 11.

From Mr M. C. Bell
Sir, Might I suggest to Mr John Bort (March 11) that justification of "snow-plow" simply requires a little know-how?

Yours sincerely,
M. C. BELL,
1 Concorde Close,
Bexhill-on-Sea,
East Sussex.
March 11.

From Mr Douglas Thomson
Sir, When I was in practice my secretary addressed a letter to "Lieutenant-Colonel... Esq." He was furious and telephoned me in high dudgeon. However he was much mollified when I explained that my secretary was a very perceptive girl who realized that he was not only an officer but also a gentleman!

Yours truly,
DOUGLAS THOMSON,
9 Nevill Park,
Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

From Mr Roger S. J. Gook
Sir, We recently replied to a query written in broken English from a Japanese customer adding at the end "...please ask for further details if necessary". Imagine our surprise two weeks later when we received a letter from the customer which began "Dear Father Details".

Yours sincerely,
ROGER S. J. GOOK,
A. R. Mowbray & Co. Ltd.,
Religious Booksellers,
28 Margaret Street, W1.

Executive Editor
Kenneth Fleet

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 Share
1598.9 (+17.3)
FT-SE 100
2017.5 (+26.5)
Bargains
57786 (51952)
USM (Datastream)
161.22 (+0.42)

THE POUND

US dollar
1.8005 (-0.0020)
W German mark
2.9321 (-0.0089)
Trade-weighted
72.2 (-0.1)

Lonrho poll fails

An attempt by a small group of shareholders in Lonrho to have acceptance of its accounts rejected on the grounds that they did not comply with the Companies Act has failed. The poll, demanded at the company's annual meeting on Thursday by shareholders connected with the Al-Fayed family, owners of the House of Fraser stores chain, showed 97.75 per cent of the shares voted in favour of accepting the accounts. Only 21 shareholders, with 297,879 shares, voted against acceptance, while more than 9,000, representing 128.34 million shares, were in favour.

Daiwa debut

Daiwa Securities, one of Japan's big four securities houses, is opening a new licensed deposit-taking operation in London on Monday. The company, called Daiwa Europe Finance, has capital of £50 million and will offer a range of services including money market and foreign exchange operations, bank loans and fund management.

£7m spending

Norcor, the building materials and packaging group, is planning to double the size of its UBM builders' merchants chain to 190 over the next four years. It expects to spend £7 million this year on new stores and improvements.

Merger talks

Newman Industries is in talks with Hawker Siddeley on merging Newman's manufacturing and distribution of electric motors with the Hawker subsidiary, Brook Crompton Parkinson Motors.

Bid approach

P&W MacLellan has received an approach which may lead to an offer for the group.

Bonn money

West Germany's money supply growth slowed in February after January's sharp rise but the trend is still up, says the Bundesbank.

Debt change

Moody's, the US credit rating service, has downgraded \$1.6 billion of debt of Standard Chartered Bank and its US subsidiary, Union Bancorp. The downgrading is on both senior and junior debt. Moody's said the reason was concern over the quality of Standard's assets.

Beecham sale

Beecham has sold its loss-making German Montell cosmetics business in the US to Revlon for \$2.5 million (£1.56 million) in cash and a royalty payment.

Britain's sugar output in 1987-88 will range between 1.35 million and 1.21 million tonnes, the commodity broker C Czarnikow said yesterday.

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MARKET SUMMARY

STOCK MARKETS

New York	2317.33 (+17.79)
Dow Jones	2169.67 (+13.95)
Nikkei Dow	2780.55 (+59.27)
Hong Kong	275.8 (-1.4)
Hang Seng	1950.8 (+10.0)
Amsterdam	1644.5 (+10.7)
Frankfurt	4626.85 (+22.27)
Brussels	444.5 (+1.5)
Paris CAC	517.5 (+0.8)
Zurich S&P	n/a
London FT-A	92.04 (+0.14)
FT-Glrs	

INTEREST RATES

London Bank Base: 10%
3-month Interbank 9 3/4%
3-month eligible bills 9 1/2-9 3/4%
US Prime Rate 7 1/4%
Federal Funds 8 1/4%
3-month Treasury Bills 5.48-5.47%
30-year bonds 9 1/2-9 3/4%

CURRENCIES

London	New York
\$1.8005	\$1.8020
DM2.9321	DM1.8332
SwFr2.4552	SwFr1.3370
FFFr7.7582	FFFr1.3610
Yen241.85	Yen151.85
Index:72.2	Index:103.1
ECU 20.708379	SDR 20.753316

Drop in rate likely before summer

Inflation holds steady at 3.9%

By David Smith, Economics Correspondent

Britain's inflation rate, now calculated with a new look retail price index, held steady at 3.9 per cent last month. The mortgage rate cuts announced yesterday will help push inflation to a low in May before it moves higher in the summer.

There was a 0.4 per cent rise in prices last month over January. The retail price index (January 1987 = 100) stood at 100.4.

Had the index retained its old base date of January 1974, it would have risen to 396.1 from 394.5 in January.

Petrol prices were up, with an average increase in the price of four-star petrol of 3.9p to £1.74 a gallon. There were higher prices for seasonal foods, cars and car maintenance, and pub beer. Coffee and bacon prices fell.

The March index will be unaffected by the Budget, but with a rise of only 0.1 per cent in the index in March 1986, a small uptick in the inflation rate is likely.

However, due to lower mortgage rates and the Chancellor's decision not to raise excise duties in line with inflation, the inflation rate could turn lower in April and May before moving up in the summer.

This could have important implications for the Prime Minister's choice of election date. The April index will be boosted by just 0.12 per cent.

as a result of the Budget, because the 2p reduction in the basic rate of income tax announced by the Chancellor means an increase in after-tax mortgage payments.

The Chancellor this week described this effect as "lunatic." But Department of Employment officials defended this treatment, because the index was intended to measure prices, not living standards.

In April last year, the index rose by 1 per cent. With a much smaller increase in prospect this year, the April inflation rate could drop to about 3.5 per cent.

For May, the 1 point cut in mortgage rates will reduce the index by 0.36 per cent and could push inflation down again. According to James Capel, the stockbroker, May's inflation rate could be 3.3 per cent. This would be significantly lower than the 3.7 per cent figure recorded at the last election.

The Treasury forecast, published on Tuesday, is for the rate to rise above 4.5 per cent during the summer, before falling back to 4 per cent by the end of the year.

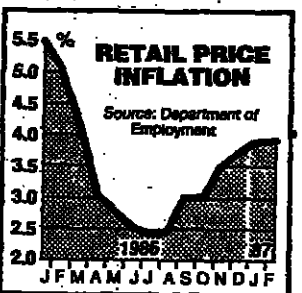
The index published yesterday, as well as incorporating the annual changes in weights and a new base date, includes certain changes.

Department of Employment officials said it was not possible to say whether inflation rates on the new basis would differ from what they would have been under the old methods. The special committee set up to advise Lord Young of Gifford, the Employment Secretary, on the index said it would be inadvisable to run the new index alongside the old.

But any differences in inflation rates measured under old and new methods, at least in the short term, would not be expected to be great.

The main changes in the index are that rent and rates are now included as gross payments. Under the old system, they were taken into the index net of any rebates.

Mortgages remain in the index, against Treasury advice, but the Department of Employment has adopted a "standardized" mortgage of £6,500 to allow for the fact that many people take out part of their mortgage for non-housing expenditure.



Societies' takings improve

By Amanda Pardee

Building societies' net receipts last month were £472 million — marginally better than January's figure, but well down on the £793 million recorded for February last year.

The failure to attract higher net receipts is attributed mainly to the privatization of British Airways and Capital Radio. The societies experienced substantial net outflows at the beginning of the month because of the flotations.

Although large net inflows followed in the second half of the month, when over-subscribed funds were returned, together with profits realized by successful applicants, these were not enough to counter the depressing effect of the earlier withdrawals.

The fact that National Savings attracted more funds than in recent months may also have affected the building societies.

The figures, released by the Building Societies Association yesterday, are all the more disappointing in the light of the increase in the demand for mortgages.

Mortgage commitments for last month exceeded £2.5 billion, and with interest rates coming down, demand is likely to increase further.

Avana offer inquiry ends

The Office of Fair Trading has completed its investigation into Ranks Hovis McDougall's bid for the Welsh-based Avana baking group, and its recommendation on whether the bid should be put before the Monopolies and Mergers Commission has gone to the Trade Secretary.

RHM extended its offer to March 23, after receiving acceptance of only 1.25 per cent of the shares.

Economy grows by strong 2.6%

By Our Economics Correspondent

The British economy grew by 2.6 per cent in 1986, ending the year with a 0.7 per cent rise in the fourth quarter. Gross domestic product was 16 per cent up on its 1981 trough and 10.5 per cent up on 1979, the last recorded cyclical peak.

The average growth rate since 1981 has been 2.75 per cent, officials said, and the economy's expansion at present appears to be continuing at this pace. Average growth under Mrs Thatcher's Government, including the 1979-81 downturn, has been 1.4 per cent a year.

Last year's 2.6 per cent growth rate, in line with Treasury estimates published in the Budget documents, was artificially boosted because of the effects of the coal strike, which depressed the economy in 1985. Without these effects, growth last year would have been about 2 per cent.

There are three measures of gross domestic product. Last year the output measure grew by 2.8 per cent, the income measure by 2.6 per cent and the expenditure measure by 2.3 per cent, producing an average growth of 2.6 per cent.

The figures show exports were the strongest growth component in the fourth quarter, rising by 5.6 per cent in real terms. Investment fell by 2.5 per cent in the fourth quarter, while consumer spending was unchanged.

Provisional figures had suggested a strong fourth quarter rise in consumer spending. Officials said the initial overestimate was partly because a larger proportion of car purchases were assumed to have come from private buyers.

For last year as a whole, consumer spending rose by 4.7 per cent.

Minorco earnings fall

By Colin Campbell

Minorco, the Bermuda-based investment arm of Anglo-American and holder of a strategic share stake in Consolidated Gold Fields and Charter Consolidated, reports lower earnings for the six months to end-December.

The company, which holds cash balances of more than \$100 million (£62.5 million), says there should be a year-on-year improvement when the full figures are announced.

Pretax profit fell from \$43 million to \$31 million and net earnings decreased from 38 cents to 26 cents a share. Charter Consolidated, where a 36 per cent stake is held, and Cons Gold have recently reported stronger results which will flow through to Minorco.

Net asset value yesterday was \$18 a share. The shares were unchanged at \$12 (750p).

Carless to buy 41% of North Sea oil company

Sale of the Century stake

By Carol Ferguson

Carless, Capel & Leonard, the independent oil company, is to acquire 41.2 per cent of the unquoted oil company, Century Power and Light.

Century is managed by the Imperial Continental Gas Association which owns the balance of the shares.

Mr Ian Clubb, group chief executive at Carless, said last night: "We will obviously get into conversation with IC Gas about the running of Century".

Carless is buying the shares from London Merchant Securities, which owns 29.4 per cent of Century, and two investment trusts in the Touche Renmant stable, TR Industrial and General Trust and TR Trustees Corporation, which own 11.8 per cent between them.

Century is a member of the North Sea consortium run by Phillips Petroleum, the US oil company which in 1965 discovered one of the earliest commercial gas fields, Hewitt, in the southern gas sector.



On the road to expansion: Carless chief executive Ian Clubb

reported a turnover of £70.7 million and a pretax profit of £23 million.

Carless will be issuing 39.5 million shares for the acquisition, worth £42 million at today's price of 107p. When the deal is completed, Carless will have 167 million shares in issue, valuing the company at £178 million.

Adding the shares now being issued to Carless shares already owned by LMS, the latter will own 28.8 per cent of the enlarged share capital. Century's current production entitlement is 9,400 barrels of oil a day, and 18 million cubic feet of gas. For the year to March 31, 1986, Century



Yasuhiro Nakasone: faces harsh criticism in Washington

Profits tumble at Enterprise Oil

By David Young, Energy Correspondent

Enterprise Oil, formed by the Government from the North Sea oil assets of British Gas, announced a slump in profits yesterday but maintained its annual dividend at 8.5p.

Profits after tax credits fell from £62.7 million in 1985 to £23.4 million, but the company is still debt-free and its results were helped by a tax credit of almost £50 million.

Its pretax profit of only £2.9 million compares with £111.1 million a year ago.

The unchanged dividend payment means the dividend will be 2.5p a share, the same as last year.

L&N plan looks set to fail

The latest break-up scheme for London & Northern was looking doomed to failure last night, less than 48 hours after it had been patched together by the company's directors and Inicorp Earl, architect of the now-lapsed Demerger bid.

After further purchases of L&N shares by its financial adviser Robert Fleming yesterday, Evered, which on Thursday launched a £106 million takeover bid for L&N, probably has a big enough stake to block the proposals.

The L&N-Inicorp Earl scheme requires 75 per cent approval by L&N shareholders. Evered, which has 20.2 per cent, and Fleming, after its purchases of the past two days, now have about 23.5 per cent.

L&N shares closed 1 1/2p higher last night at 86p, which is 1p above the Evered offer of 85p a share. Taking the Evered share price at last night's closing level of 223p, the share exchange terms value L&N at 89.2p.

Blow for Mersey

By Michael Tate

Shareholders in the embattled Mersey Docks and Harbour Company had their hopes of further compensation payments shattered yesterday.

The ruling involved an assessment by the Lands Tribunal that the company's south docks, acquired by the Merseyside Development Corporation in 1982, were worth just under £3.09 million.

The MDH directors, describing the figure as "disappointing", gave a warning that

US government to act on C&W Japan contract

From David Watts in Tokyo and Colin Narborough

The struggle by Cable and Wireless to break into Japan's international telecommunications market will be on the American agenda when the Japanese prime minister visits Washington in late April or early May.

Mr Yasuhiro Nakasone's visit has not yet been formally announced but the International Digital Communications-C&W case is "on our checklist", according to an American diplomat.

He said the attempt to block foreign participation was such a blatant violation of the US-Japan Market Opening Sector Selective Agreement, that the Japanese would find it hard to resist American arguments which are now backed by a 93-0 Senate vote calling on President Reagan to intervene with Japan over both IDC and semi-conductors.

A spokesman for C Itoh, a member of the IDC consortium, said: "We are looking for further action from the US in the near future."

Mr Nakasone will visit the US and then there is the Venice summit after that. I think we will have to wait about two months.

The US Secretary of State, Mr George Shultz, has now weighed in with a letter on IDC's behalf in what is developing into a major political confrontation.

Of the other partners in the IDC consortium with C&W, C Itoh appears to be the most resolute, but Toyota is now saying that unification of the two competing consortia is important.

Mr Jonathan Solomon, the director of corporate strategy at Cable and Wireless, said yesterday that the US Department of Defence is one of the parties interested in seeing the US-C&W trans-Pacific cable going ahead. He added that he expected the first indication of a change of thinking by the Japanese government would emerge in the press over the weekend.

He added that Mr Fumio Watanabe, the businessman who has been given the job of unifying the two competing consortia, was a "good Japanese gentleman" who was being very fair. "I believe if he were given a free hand he could negotiate something sensible but he's not been given a free hand."

Underlining Britain's interest in greater access to the Japanese home market, Mrs Thatcher recently intervened on C&W's behalf. In a personal letter to Mr Nakasone she expressed the hope that C&W's bid for a contract would be treated fairly.

Japan's own Foreign Ministry, sensitive to international pressure, has also backed C&W. But the Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Telegraphs, which is in charge of the race for a licence to operate in Japan's \$1 billion international communications market, remains intent on limiting the company's stake to 3 per cent. This would restrict its influence to a minimum.

Mr Watanabe earlier this week announced that the leading Japanese partners have agreed to merge. In the new consortium C&W would have only 3 per cent, versus 20 per cent in its original grouping.

In London yesterday, Cable and Wireless issued a statement to clear up "misunderstandings" arising from Mr Watanabe's recent press conference, saying that the company does not agree to the terms of unification.

It said that as Japanese law permits no discrimination between foreign and national capital, it was unacceptable to restrict foreign participation in the consortium to non-executive directors.

A 3 per cent share could not be considered as a serious business investment for a foreign firm, when Japanese law allows for up to 33.3 per cent.

It was also necessary for a competitor to the Japanese telecommunications monopoly Kokusai Denwa Denwa to own its own facilities, if it were to offer true competition.

Clarification of these points was a condition for C&W entering into any "useful" negotiations.

Final call for Luxembourg.

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Worldwide Recovery	US Dollars

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*This constitutes our understanding of U.K. tax legislation at the present time.

Oppenheimer

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FIXED PRICE OFFER
MARCH 20 1987

BUSINESS SUMMARY

Mexico signs \$7.7bn new loan agreements

New York (Reuters) - Mexican officials and representatives of about 360 creditor banks worldwide have started to sign agreements for \$7.7 billion (\$4.8 billion) in new loans. Citibank said as co-chairman of Mexico's bank advisory committee. The package, which was agreed in principle with the committee last October, is built on a core loan of \$6 billion, of which \$5 billion will be lent for 12 years with five years' grace.

Heron Corp joint venture

Heron Corporation, run by Mr Gerald Ronson (right), has agreed to put up to £12 million into a housing venture to be established jointly with Shield, the USM-quoted property developer. Heron, through National Insurance & Guarantee, will raise loans of £10 million and subscribe for and take out options on Shield shares.



Rowntree renamed

Rowntree Mackintosh, the confectionery company, wants to drop Mackintosh from the name of the parent group. The name dates back to the 1969 merger of Rowntree and Company with John Mackintosh, a company based in Norway, which brought with it the Quality Street and Rolab brand names.

Shareholders' approval will be sought at the annual meeting on April 28. Mr Kenneth Dixon, the group chairman, said the use of the old name was less appropriate after recent acquisitions by the group, particularly in the United States. However, the name Rowntree Mackintosh will continue to be used for the confectionery subsidiary, the core business in Britain.

Abercom in bid talks

Abercom Holdings, the South African engineering group whose British interests include the Davidson custom fuses company, has said it is in talks which may lead to a bid. Abercom, advising shareholders to "exercise caution," said no announcement was expected before May. The shares were unchanged at 70p.

New chief for ISO named

The International Sugar Organization has ended its 18-month search for a new executive director with the appointment of Señor Alfredo Ricart of the Dominican Republic. Resolving the commodity body's budget problems will be high on the agenda of Señor Ricart, who is a former ambassador to London.

Loan aid for East End

Lloyd's of London has set up a £50,000 loan fund to help small businesses in London's East End. Business in the Community, the inner-city aid organization, said the money would be distributed through enterprise agencies in areas such as Tower Hamlets, with an unemployment rate of 22 per cent. Many companies that will benefit are run by the Bangladeshi community.

Mr Robert Davies, BIC's development director, said deprived areas were to be found within about 200 yards of the City of London boundary. Unemployment among young people in parts of east London was as high as 35 per cent.

Ault & Wiborg back with 2p dividend

COMPANY NEWS

Ault & Wiborg, the chemical inks and paints group, is to pay a dividend after a break of two years. Shareholders will receive 2p for the year to end-December 1986, after pretax profit more than doubled to £3.09 million from £1.41 million.

Turnover at £76.78 million was up from £72.67 million, while operating profit soared from £485,000 to £542,000. A drop in exceptional items, such as closure costs, from £1.19 million to £251,000, helped the figures.

After cutting the loss from discontinued activities from £308,000 to £273,000, an after-tax profit of £2.79 million replaces a previous loss of £1.72 million. In addition, there are extraordinary credits of £1.11 million against a £56,000 debit last time.

CONSULTANTS (COMPUTER & FINANCIAL): Total dividend for 1986 raised to 2p (0.75p). Turnover £11.36 million (£4.65 million). Pretax profit £2.51 million (£971,000). The company has conditionally agreed to acquire Dunlop Associates and David Downie for 1.6 million new ordinary shares and £3.87 million in cash.

SK GENT: Interim dividend 0.5p (0.5p), payable on May 11, for the six months to December 31. Turnover £45.04 million (£43.87 million). Pretax profit £525,000 (£23,000). Earnings per share 1.2p (0.2p loss).

WALTER DUNCAN & GOODRIKE: Dividend 20p (15p) for 1986. Profit, before tax and extraordinary items, £6.88 million (£1.72 million). Earnings per share 30p.04p (87.23p).

DELANEY GROUP: Total payment for 1986 2.7p (2.4p). Turnover £9.02 million (£8.16 million). Pretax profit £1.02 million (£720,000). Earnings per share 5.92p (3.71p).

RELIABLE PROPERTIES: Six months to December 31. Interim dividend 2.25p (1.25p), payable on April 30. Pretax profit £620,821 (£252,029). Earnings per share 16.8p (6.3p). The second half-year is expected to be highly satisfactory, the board reports.

INOCO: Agreement has been reached in principle with an associate of Monoco Group Fund to purchase a portfolio of commercial properties with a gross value of about £13 million. The final consideration will be determined by independent valuation.

KELLOCK TRUST: Final dividend 0.1p (0.15p) for 1986, payable on May 22. Turnover £2.56 million (£2.59 million). Pretax profit £1.08 million (£772,000). Earnings per share 0.53p (0.42p).

WATMOUGHS (HOLDINGS): Total dividend 7.8p (6.5p) for 1986. Turnover £11.12 million (£30.8 million). Pretax profit £1.08 million (£772,000). Earnings per share 22.68p (18.25p). One-for-five scrip issue proposed. Turnover in the first weeks of 1987 is considerably higher than last time.

EXTEL: The group has agreed terms for the sale of MGE Systems, a supplier of management and tax software packages to the accountancy profession, to Paxus Professional Office Systems. The consideration will be £575,000 cash, plus the audited value of certain assets at March 31.

DUNTON GROUP: Six months to November 30. Interim dividend 0.20p (0.16p). Turnover £1.06 million (£1.28 million). Pretax profit £180,000 (£172,000). Earnings per share 0.65p (0.99p).

TOD: Six months to December 31. Interim dividend 1.5p (1.3p). Turnover £10.41 million (£5.03 million). Pretax profit £1.02 million (£615,000). Earnings per share 7.9p (5.4p).

CALA: Six months to December 31. Interim dividend 0.7p (0.4p). Turnover £13.78 million (£9.79 million). Pretax profit £1.03 million (£843,000). Earnings per share, adjusted, 2.63p (2.32p).

HELGRAVE HOLDINGS: The company has agreed to purchase the Royal Albion Hotel in Brighton. In addition to the freehold, the price of £3 million includes goodwill and all the fixtures, fittings, furnishings and equipment.

BREDELO PROPERTIES: Agreements for lease have been signed with Boots and C&A on the store areas of the Bon Accord retail development in Aberdeen. They complement a decision by John Lewis to occupy a store linked to the Bon Accord centre. Work has started on development, which will be completed in 1990 at a cost of £50 million.

APPOINTMENTS

The Bankers' Investment Trust: Mr JD Abell has been made a director. Leyland DAF: Mr Roger Phillips becomes managing director of the marketing and sales organization from April 6. He will head a team consisting of Mr Peter Cunniffe, who will become service director, Mr Cliff Grant, director of administration and finance, Mr Brian Smith, parts director, Mr Christopher Thorneycroft-Smith, marketing director, Mr Robin Woolcock, director of sales operations, and Mr Ian Jones, truck sales director.

Turner & Newall: Mr William Everard becomes a director and Mr Roger Boller a non-executive director. ABP Holdings: Mr Charles Owens has been appointed finance director and joins the board as an executive director from May 3.

Wace Group: Mr John Clegg and Mr Christopher Budd have been appointed joint managing directors. Dutton-Forsyth Motor Group: Mr Clifford Bosley becomes commercial director. CB-Linnell: Mr Michael Pugh has been made a director for sales and marketing appointments.

NetWest Australia Bank: Mr Keith Shackell has become deputy chief executive and general manager. British Airways: Sir Francis Kennedy joins the board.

Debenham Tewson & Chirpocks: Mr Richard Jones, Mr John Hlewood, Mr Tim Smyth, Mr Peter Evans and Mr Andrew Stewart become partners.

Dow index climbs above 2,300 mark

New York (Agencies) - Shares moved sharply higher and the Dow Jones industrial average rose firmly across the 2,300 mark in early trading yesterday.

One trader said that investors were being cautious, but seeing the market at a record level, they also did not want to miss a big gain in prices.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose by 17.33 points to 2,316.90. On Thursday, the average rose by 12.64 to 2,299.57 - its third record close in as many days. Accelerated buying in the last hour carried the average above 2,300 almost to the close.

The number of rising issues yesterday outnumbered falling ones by three to one on a volume of 58 million shares.

Mar 19	Mar 18	Mar 17	Mar 16	Mar 15	Mar 14			
AMR	56	54%	Firestone	35%	39%	PapaJohn	24%	34%
ASA	49	47%	Pf Chgo	39%	39%	Paycom	75	74%
AT&T	49	47%	Int'l Drng	100	100	Paycom Ddr	75	74%
AT&T Signal	47%	47%	Pf Pwr C	30	31%	Paycom Mgr	75	74%
BA	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
BAC	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
BHP	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
BP	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
BSA	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
BSI	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
BVA	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
BT	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
BUL	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
BUR	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
CA	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
CAL	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
CAN	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
CAR	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
CAT	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
CC	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
CE	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
CEL	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
CF	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
CH	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
CHS	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
CHT	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
CHV	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
CHW	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
CHX	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
CHY	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	75	74%
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CHEO	49	47%	Pf Wacine	45%	46%	Paycom Pwr	7	

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INVESTMENT TRUSTS

FINANCIAL TRUSTS

Portfolio Gold

From your portfolio card check your eight share price movements on this page only. Add them up to give you your overall total and check this against the daily dividend figure. If it matches, you have won outright or a share of the total daily prize money stated. If you are a winner follow the claim procedure on the back of your card. You must always have your card available when claiming. Game rules appear on the back of your card.

No.	Company	Group	Gain or Loss
1	Midland (a)	Bank, Discount	
2	Union	Bank, Discount	
3	Telephone Renewals	Electronics	
4	Indefatigable	Industrials A-D	
5	UK Shipping	Bank, Discount	
6	Barnes-Anderson	Industrials A-D	
7	Prop Security	Property	
8	Amber Day	Drugs, Stores	
9	Quilley	Motor, Aircraft	
10	Comline	Chemicals, Plastics	
11	Parnell Elect	Electronics	
12	Aut New Z	Bank, Discount	
13	AIM	Industrials A-D	
14	Macro 4	Electronics	
15	General Motor	Motor, Aircraft	
16	Perkins A	Textiles	
17	Berkley Op	Buildings, Roads	
18	Bowdler	Electronics	
19	Drevelis (J A)	Breweries	
20	Land Sec	Property	
21	Amesbury	Motor, Aircraft	
22	Jerome (S)	Textiles	
23	Honda Motor	Motor, Aircraft	
24	Brown (Marshall)	Breweries	
25	Liberty	Drugs, Stores	
26	Salveston (Chas)	Foods	
27	Vaux	Breweries	
28	Lookers	Motor, Aircraft	
29	Cambridge Elec	Electronics	
30	First Nat Finance	Bank, Discount	
31	Gosamer	Industrials E-K	
32	Combined English	Drugs, Stores	
33	Samuels	Drugs, Stores	
34	Stard Chart (a)	Bank, Discount	
35	Picco (a)	Industrials E-K	
36	Sandell Perkins	Buildings, Roads	
37	Fernau	Electronics	
38	Granada (a)	Industrials E-K	
39	Holical Bar	Buildings, Roads	
40	Barclays (a)	Bank, Discount	
41	CASE	Electronics	
42	Vista	Industrials S-Z	
43	By Royal	Chemicals, Plastics	
44	Burgess-Brick	Buildings, Roads	

Please take into account any minus signs

Weekly Dividend						
Please make a note of your daily totals for the weekly dividend of £8,000 in today's newspaper.						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN

BRITISH FUNDS			
1986	High	Low	Net Change

SHORTS (Under Five Years)			
1986	High	Low	Net Change

FIVE TO FIFTEEN YEARS			
1986	High	Low	Net Change

OVER FIFTEEN YEARS			
1986	High	Low	Net Change

UNDATED			
1986	High	Low	Net Change

INDEX-LINKED			
1986	High	Low	Net Change

BANKS DISCOUNT HP			
1986	High	Low	Net Change

ELECTRICALS			
1986	High	Low	Net Change

STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES

Firm end to Budget account

(Current market price multiplied by the number of shares in issue for the stock quoted)
ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings began March 9. Dealings end yesterday. Settlement day March 30.
Forward bargains are permitted on two previous business days.

Prices are recorded at 5pm. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close and may differ from changes calculated by comparing 5pm prices, published the previous day. Where one price is quoted, it is a middle price. Changes, yields and price earnings ratios are based on middle prices. (a) denotes Alpha Stocks.

1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

BREWERIES						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

BUILDINGS AND ROADS						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

CHEMICALS, PLASTICS						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

CINEMAS AND TV						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

HOTELS AND CATERERS						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

DRAPERY AND STORES						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

INDUSTRIALS A-D						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

FINANCE AND LAND						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

FOODS						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

L-R						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

S-Z						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

NEWSPAPERS AND PUBLISHERS						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

OIL & GAS						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

TOBACCO						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

INSURANCE						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

LEISURE						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

MINING						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

MOTORS AND AIRCRAFT						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

SHOES AND LEATHER						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

TEXTILES						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

OVERSEAS TRADERS						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

PAPER, PRINTING, ADVERT'G						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

PROPERTY						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

SHIPPING						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

TOBACCO						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

Portfolio Gold

DAILY DIVIDEND
£8,000

Claims required for
+46 points

WEEKLY DIVIDEND
£8,000

Claims required for
+141 points

Claimants should ring 0254-53272

1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

OVERSEAS TRADERS						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

PAPER, PRINTING, ADVERT'G						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

PROPERTY						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

SHIPPING						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

TOBACCO						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

SHOES AND LEATHER						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

TEXTILES						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

OIL & GAS						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

TOBACCO						
1987	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	PE

Ex dividend or Ex all is Forecast dividend or interim payment passed. Price at suspension of Dividend and Forecast earnings or Ex other is Pre-merger figures or share split 1 for free. No significant data.



term.

Use the coupon below:

Interest Taxable, paid gross ¹Tax free ²Higher returns for larger balances ³Higher return for balance over \$25,000 ⁴Other banks may differ ⁵Extra interest accounts usually pay 1-2 percent above ordinary accounts ⁶Increased at end of year in line with rate of inflation ⁷Returns for higher rate taxpayers may differ ⁸Subject to type of bond and above rate ⁹Can be taxed at 33% ¹⁰U.S. National Savings Certificate was suspended on March 10th. Retail Prices Index was re-indexed March 20th. Research: Deborah Bann (01-822 9082)

Adam & Company	10.00%
BCCI	10.50%
Citibank Savings	12.45%
Consolidated Crds	10.00%
Co-operative Bank	10.00%
C. Hoare & Co.	10.00%
Hong Kong & Shanghai	10.00%
Lloyds Bank	10.00%
Nat Westminster	10.00%
Royal Bank of Scotland	10.00%
TSB	10.00%
Citibank NA	10.00%

† Mortgage Base Rate.

[illegible]

Prices in this section refer to Thursday's trading

Edited by Peter Gartland

FAMILY MONEY/1

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The end of FMP

Allied Dunbar has withdrawn its Financial Management Programme and is unlikely to reintroduce it for at least two years. FMP was introduced in October 1983 as an integrated cash management account modelled largely on a similar scheme marketed by Merrill Lynch in the United States. But the concept has not taken off here. Allied Dunbar is shy of revealing how many clients it has attracted to FMP but the number has clearly failed to live up to expectations. Existing FMP clients will continue to get the same service, says Allied Dunbar, though not in an integrated form. No new clients are being taken on.

Free cash advice

Chartered accountants will be giving free advice to anyone who asks, from Monday through to Friday, between 6pm and 9pm. All you have to do is call 01-628 2467 to speak to a qualified chartered accountant on any financial matter that concerns you... tax, starting up on your own, VAT.

A million in debt

More than a million council tenants are in arrears on rent and rates, according to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. Arrears are more exaggerated in urban areas.

Long-term Lawson

At 59 minutes Nigel Lawson's 1987 Budget was the shortest since Benjamin Disraeli's in 1867.

But no-one should be misled by the brevity of it all. The Finance Bill usually has some stings in the tail and the only reason to suppose that this year's will be any different is that it may be truncated to clear the decks for a June election.

But that is supposition. In the meantime, the Budget is fact. And the fact is that it was predictably a good-news event. The standard rate of income tax came down by 2p and

the starting points for income tax at 40 and 45 per cent went up. Personal allowances were also increased, in line with inflation, and there is a new higher age allowance for those aged 80 and over.

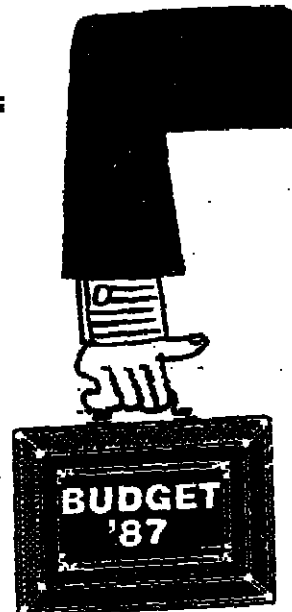
For once the Chancellor was able to forestall the well rehearsed howls of protest by leaving unchanged the excise duty on tobacco, drinks and leaded petrol. Nor did he raise car tax.

Mr Lawson had clearly decided that short-term manoeuvring just was not necessary at a time when

the Government's borrowing requirement is so modest.

The money market quickly took note and there was a further round of bank base rate cuts on Wednesday, the second this month.

But long term this was a Budget of subtle and major change. Nowhere is this more evident than in the refinements now being put in place for pensions reform. These changes have profound implications for the future prosperity of more than 20 million people in this country.



Starting on this page, Family Money this week analyses the main effects of the Budget on the financial affairs of individual savers and investors.

Peter Gartland

More tax-free pay for old age pensioners

The age allowance for the over-65s, that is, the amount of income they can earn in addition to the ordinary personal allowances without incurring any tax liability, has been increased in line with inflation. The new level for a single person will now be £110 higher at £2,960 and the allowance for married couples has risen by £170 to £4,675.

At the same time the income limit for these allowances has been increased from £9,400 to £9,800. As soon as this limit has been reached, for every additional £3 of income the age allowance is reduced by £2. Effectively, this means tax has to be paid on both the extra £3 earned and the £2

which would otherwise have been tax-free.

Under the new limit, the single age allowance is forfeited where income reaches £10,603, and the married allowance is eliminated where the level of income is £11,120.

In addition to these changes, a higher level of age allowance has been introduced for the over-80s. For a single person this is £3,070 and for a married couple, where either or both have reached 80, it is £4,845. The level of income required to wipe out these higher allowances is £11,375 for a married couple and £10,768 for a single person.

The scale charges used for taxing company cars will go up by 10 per cent across the board from April next year. The changes mean that a basic rate taxpayer driving a company car of up to 1.4 litres, which is less than four years old, will have to pay an extra 29p a week, bringing the annual figure for tax up to £156.60. For a 2-litre car, the cost will be an extra 57p a week. The scales relating to petrol provided for private motoring have not been increased this year.

The covenant cut

Although no direct reference was made to deeds of covenant in the Budget, the cut in the standard rate of income tax will reduce the amount of tax relief available to individuals who receive covenanted payments.

Deeds of covenant are most commonly used by parents who wish to contribute towards their son's or daughter's further education grant. Provided the student has no other income — and that includes vacation earnings — the covenant should be linked to the

single person's allowance. For the new tax year this will be £2,425.

As tax relief is available only at the standard rate, this will mean that the maximum sum recoverable from the Inland Revenue will be £54.75, assuming a net covenant of £1,770.25 is made.

In comparison, covenants linked to the single person's allowance of £2,335 for the tax year ending on April 5 this year will attract relief at 29 per cent, producing £677.15 on a net covenant of £2,335.

Since the Finance Act 1984, all friendly societies have been exempt from tax on the profits of life or endowment assurance policies provided the sum assured has been no greater than £750. The societies had been hoping that the limits would be raised substantially, to at least £5,000.

However, the Chancellor has proposed that for contracts made after September 1 this year the limit will be based on annual premiums of £100 instead of the gross sum assured of £750. Peter Gray, general manager of the Tinsbury Wells Equitable Friendly Society, is very disappointed by this announcement, which he says will make little difference as societies can already accept annual premiums of £100 on 10-year extended policies. He is now convinced that "there is a concerted campaign to force friendly societies out of existence".

Changing shares

Employees of a company that is successfully taken over will now be able to exchange any existing share options they have for options over shares in the acquiring company. To qualify, the replacement options will have to continue to be governed by the rules of the target company's existing scheme.

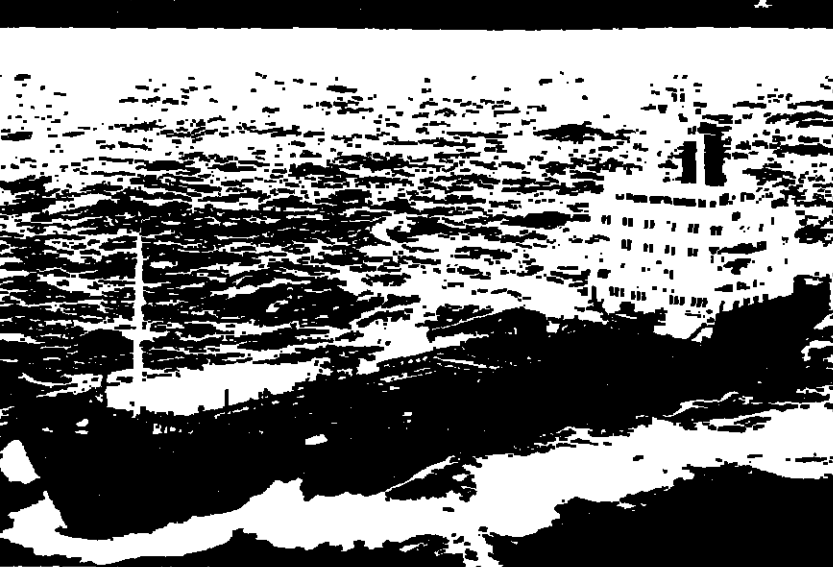
A further condition is that when the options are exchanged, the value of those acquired must be equal to those given up. This change comes in response to representations from companies involved in take-overs. The obvious attraction of such a facility is that it encourages loyalty from the employees of the target company.

A married couple's decision to elect for separate taxation in the new tax year will be worth considering if their combined income, before personal allowances but after the deduction of any other reliefs, including a gross figure for mortgage interest, exceeds £26,870.

However, to be effective, the lower income must be at least £6,545. This decreases in stages to £4,916 where the combined income exceeds £48,541.

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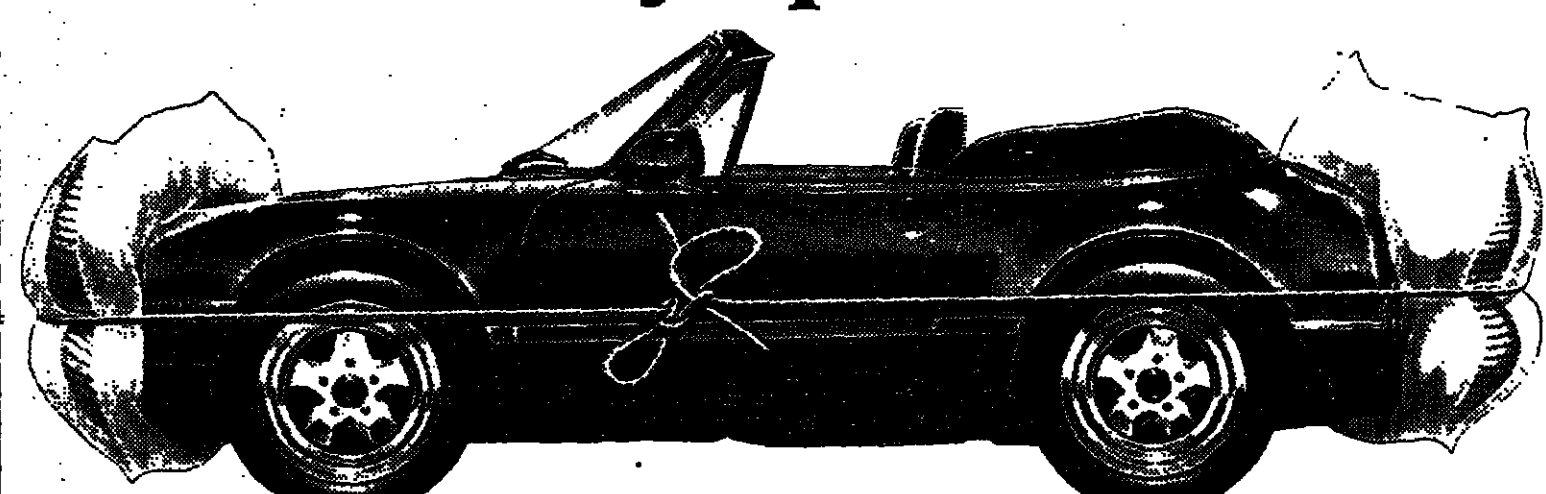
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Pensions: the choice will be yours

Norman Fowler this week confirmed the Government's Budget decision to bring forward by three months the start of personal pensions. **PETER GARTLAND** explains

January 4, 1988, is now to be the start date for personal pensions although the originally scheduled start date for members of an occupational scheme who wish to opt out remains at April 6, 1988. It had previously been expected that personal pensions would not be available at all until April 1988.

This means that from January 4, 1988, a personal pension can be used as an alternative to the State Earnings-Related Pension Scheme (SERPS), which in any event is being scaled down over a period of years. There are around 10 million people making contributions to SERPS. It also means that from April 6, 1988, a further 11 million employed people will be able to join or remain in their occupational scheme or take out a money purchase personal pension.

Norman Fowler, the Social Services Secretary, was quick to stress this week that it was not government policy to maximize transfers from occupational schemes to personal pensions. Occupational schemes would remain the backbone of pension provision. Nevertheless, the Government wanted to give people greater choice.

So although there would be no onus on employers to disseminate information about personal pensions, Mr Fowler thought there would be no lack of information available either from Government or from pension providers themselves.

He explained that the Government's decision to bring forward by three months the personal pensions start date for those not already in a pension scheme was based on providing people with an earlier opportunity to take

advantage of the new choices.

There are also implications in hard cash terms. It means people will be able to get the benefit of a minimum contribution, paid over to their personal pension by the DHSS, for a full extra year. The minimum contribution paid by the DHSS is based on reduced National Insurance contributions for employees who are contracted out of SERPS. People who are contracted out through a personal pension will pay full rate National Insurance contribu-



The minister speaks: Fowler on the intricacies of pensions

tions, but the rebate will be refunded as a minimum contribution to their personal pension.

This contracted-out rebate, which varies from year to year, will be topped up by a 2 per cent incentive provided by the Government to encourage people out of SERPS and into personal pensions.

People who move from SERPS to a personal pension between January 4, 1988, and April 5, 1989, will get the contracted-out rebate backdated to April 1987. They will also get the 2 per cent incentive backdated and this will now be available for six years.

Members of an occupational scheme who take out a personal pension from April 6, 1988, will get the incentive for five years, provided they have not been in a contracted-out pension scheme for more than two years.

Changes in the arrangements for additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) were also announced this week. Nigel Lawson said in his Budget that from October 1987 members of occupational pension schemes will have the option of making

can only pay these extra contributions to a savings arrangement provided by their own pension scheme.

The Government had intended to go some way towards de-regulating the AVC structure from April 1988. As a result of the changes announced this week, members of occupational schemes will be able to make AVC payments irrespective of their employer's arrangements. These so-called free-standing AVCs can be run alongside occupational AVCs provided they are within Revenue limits.

However, as free-standing AVCs are intended to help occupational scheme members enhance their pension expectations, the Revenue has said it will not be possible for AVC rights to be taken as a tax-free lump sum.

Mr Fowler said this week that only about 10 per cent of scheme members have AVC arrangements. He is clearly hoping for a big increase in AVCs. The pensions changes are in line with the present Government's desire to increase labour mobility by making it easier for people to take pension rights with them when changing jobs.

The plans are broadly in line with an Inland Revenue consultative document published last November, but the proposal that people should be limited to one personal pension at a time has been dropped.

Contributions to a personal pension may come from three sources. Apart from the DHSS input, the member and the employer, if he or she wishes, can contribute.

Personal pensions will operate in a similar way to self-employed retirement annuities, which will in future be subject to the same tax regime as personal pensions. Existing legislation on retirement annuities will be replaced by the terms of the Finance Act 1987. The maximum annual contribution to a personal pension plan will be 17.5 per cent of income for people up to the age of 50. For people above 50 higher limits will

apply, rising to a maximum of 27.5 per cent.

The earlier start for personal pensions will be welcomed by banks, building societies and unit trust groups, which will be able to compete with insurance companies sooner than expected on this territory previously denied to them. But the welcome will be tempered by the fact that many of these new personal pension providers will have difficulty in getting the systems ready to cope with marketing the new contracts from the start of next year.

Apart from the welcome moves on personal pensions and AVCs, Budget day brought with it some unpleasant shocks on the pensions front, particularly for the highly paid. One sentence in a Revenue statement says it all: "The scope for exploiting the tax reliefs, particularly by very high earners, will be curbed."

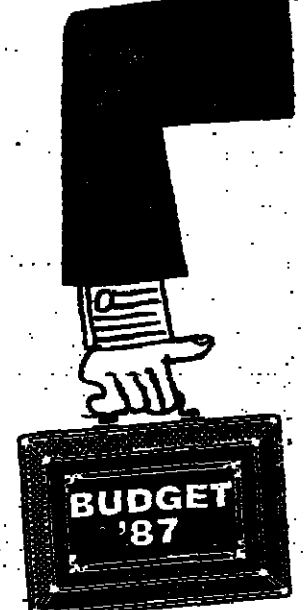
Top of the list is maximum lump sum benefits. Up to now the maximum has been defined as one and a half times final salary. In future the maximum will be a monetary sum, £150,000. This is the maximum lump sum benefit for which someone with final salary of £100,000 could qualify. The same figure will apply to personal pension and retirement annuity contracts.

As Legal & General pointed out, only the highest earners

are affected, but their view was that the Chancellor should confirm that the £150,000 ceiling would be indexed and that he had no other plans to restrict these cash sums further.

If the figure of £150,000 becomes, to pensions what £50,000 has become to mortgage interest relief, that is, frozen in time, the growth of pension mortgages will be under severe threat.

Also on the "exploitation" front, the definition of "final remuneration" has been tightened up to prevent artificial inflation of the figure on



which benefits are based. In addition, the definition will now exclude taxable income from share option schemes. Employee benefit consultants Mercer Fraser are in no doubt that the inclusion of share option gains in final remuneration has the effect of artificially boosting earnings for benefit calculation purposes.

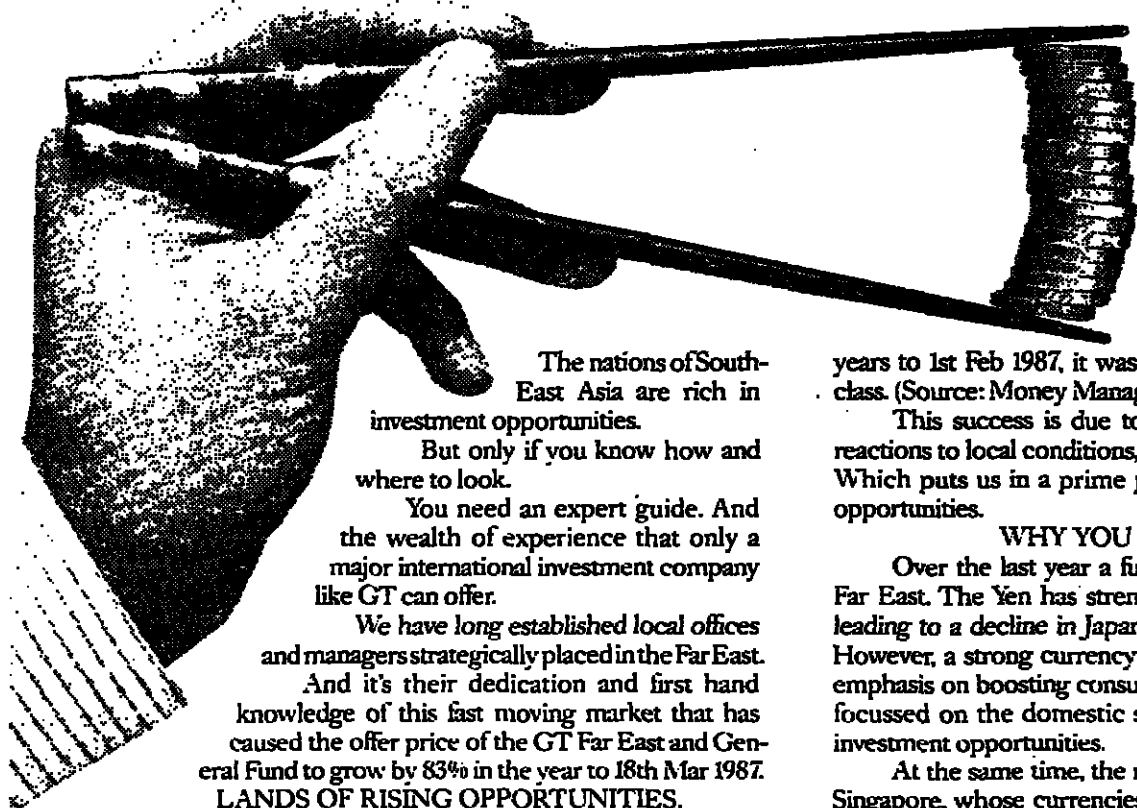
There is also a change in the minimum period of service an employee requires in order to qualify for a full two-thirds pension. Up to now some privileged employees have been able to qualify for a maximum pension of two-thirds of final salary after only 10 years' service. The Government considers this system to be too generous and has replaced it with a new scale which requires 20 years' service for a maximum two-thirds pension.

Overall, the main pensions proposals stemming from this week's Budget are much as expected, and they clear a path for this Government's final lap in its major reform of the subject.

Two problems remain. The first is that many providers of personal pensions will not be ready for January 1988 and are beginning to say so.

The second problem is a real time-bomb. It is quite simply this. If the present Government does not form the next government we could be right back to square one on the whole pensions issue.

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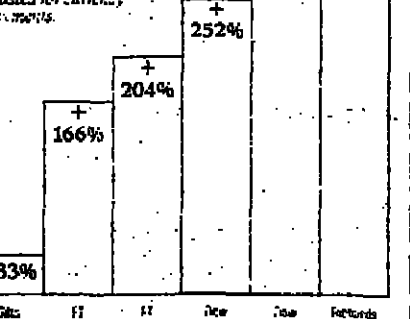
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FAMILY MONEY/3

The home loan posers

AMANDA PARDOE checks on mortgage costs following post-Budget mortgage cuts and the Chancellor's decision not to alter the threshold for interest relief

Two Budget predictions that failed to materialize were that the Chancellor would raise the threshold for mortgage interest relief from £30,000 to £35,000 and limit relief to the standard rate of income tax. As it turned out, Nigel Lawson adopted a *laissez-faire* attitude. So, the threshold remains at its 1983 level of £30,000, and borrowers who are faced at the top rate are still able to claim tax relief at 60 per cent.

£15,000 REPAYMENT MORTGAGE 25 YEARS

Rate of tax	Net monthly outlay (£)
27%	119.24
40%	100.98
45%	93.93
50%	86.90
55%	79.87
60%	72.83

Interest rate 11%

Rate of tax	Net monthly outlay (£)
27%	117.41
40%	99.54
45%	92.66
50%	85.79
55%	78.91
60%	72.04

£30,000 REPAYMENT MORTGAGE 25 YEARS

Rate of tax	Net monthly outlay (£)
27%	238.47
40%	201.91
45%	187.85
50%	173.78
55%	159.72
60%	145.66

Interest rate 11%

Rate of tax	Net monthly outlay (£)
27%	234.81
40%	199.06
45%	185.31
50%	171.56
55%	157.81
60%	144.06

£45,000 REPAYMENT MORTGAGE 25 YEARS

Rate of tax	Net monthly outlay (£)
27%	380.71
40%	344.15
45%	330.09
50%	316.02
55%	301.96
60%	287.90

Interest rate 11%

Rate of tax	Net monthly outlay (£)
27%	374.34
40%	338.59
45%	324.84
50%	311.09
55%	297.34
60%	283.59

Source: Nationwide Building Society

interest relief ceiling has been increased only once since its introduction in 1974, when it was pitched at £25,000, now makes the possibility of any future increase fairly unlikely. The case put forward for increasing the threshold has been based primarily on the difficulties experienced by first-time buyers, particularly those who live in the south of England, where property prices have continued to soar since the last increase in the threshold four years ago.

Figures produced by the Halifax Building Society show that over the three years to the end of 1986 prices in central London rose by 60 per cent, and in the South-East a rise of 44 per cent was recorded.

In other parts of the country the situation was rather different, with prices in the North-West going up by 19 per cent, and those in the North-East rising by a modest 15 per cent.

As a result of this continuing trend, the Halifax has calculated that the average property price in Greater London is now £53,200, and in the South-East the average is £41,100. The average for the country as a whole is £32,200.

Consequently, while the average mortgage for all first-time buyers is £25,000, the typical advance made by the society to first-time buyers in London is £41,100, and in the South-East it is £32,289.

At the other end of the scale, the loan required by first-time buyers in Yorkshire and Humberside is just £17,614.

Instead of easing the burden faced by young people trying to step on to the first rung of the mortgage ladder, the immediate effect of the cut in the standard rate of income tax could have resulted in a rise in actual monthly mortgage payments, had a cut in the mortgage rate been delayed.

This is because the 2 per cent reduction, bringing the standard rate down to 27 per cent, necessarily means a cut in the amount of tax relief.

To demonstrate, were mortgage rates to remain at their pre-Budget level of 12.25 per cent, for a standard rate taxpayer, the cost of a £30,000 repayment mortgage running for 25 years, would be £301.51 a month from the start of the new tax year, when the 27 per cent standard rate of income tax takes effect.

At present, with the standard rate at 29 per cent, the same mortgage costs £295.95 per month.

It should be remembered that, at the same time, the reduction in the standard rate of tax will mean an increase in the amount of take-home pay.

According to the Inland Revenue, a single person earning £140 a week will pay £2.37 a week less in tax, and a married man earning £200 will pay £3.32 a week less.

With regard to the rate of interest charged on mortgages, this is now definitely on the way down. The week before the Budget saw base rates fall by half a per cent. On Wednesday this week a further half per cent cut was announced. And the current view in financial markets is that yet another half per cent reduction can be expected shortly.

Clearly, with base rates falling, the pressure on the building societies to lower

mortgage rates has intensified.

Even before the Budget, Midland Bank cut its mortgage rate from 12.5 per cent to 11.5. This week Girobank reduced its rate for both endowment and repayment mortgages by 1 per cent to 11.25 per cent. And yesterday the Abbey National announced a cut of 1.125 per cent, bringing its rate down to 11.25 per cent. The Halifax, quick to respond, has now lowered its rate to 11.25 per cent. These lower rates will apply to new advances with immediate effect. The reduction for existing borrowers will start on the May 1.

Following this move by the two largest societies it is inevitable that the rest of the

Competition from National Savings

industry will announce a similar reduction next week. Jim Murgatroyd, of the Halifax, believes the societies have now got another tough year ahead. While recognizing that a fall in the mortgage rate had to come, they are also aware that they have got to keep investment rates competitive if they are to avoid the return of mortgage queues.

This dilemma is com-

licated further by the fact that the 32nd issue of National Savings Certificates has recently been withdrawn.

As building societies and National Savings compete for investors' deposits, the societies will want to ensure that the new issue of National Savings Certificates is not more attractive than their investment accounts.

For the moment it looks as though general level of mortgage rates will come down to 11.25 per cent. However, Peter Turley, of the Skipton Building Society, does not rule out the possibility of the rate falling to 11 per cent in the near future.

The accompanying table shows the net monthly outlay on a 25-year repayment mortgage of £15,000, £30,000 and £45,000 with interest rates at 11.5 per cent and 11 per cent. In each case, the figures relate to mortgages advanced to either a single person or a married couple. The significance of this is that two single people who buy a home together can each claim mortgage interest relief up to the £30,000 limit.

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MERCURY RECOVERY FUND PUTS YOUR MONEY INTO UK SHARES BEFORE THEY TAKE OFF, NOT AFTER.

The Mercury Recovery Fund is a unit trust that invests, primarily for capital growth in shares which have been left behind by the bull markets of recent years.

These are not poor quality shares which have hit rock-bottom and are little more than a gamble.

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WHY INVEST IN A RECOVERY FUND?

If your unit trust buys a share that has already risen considerably, it may well have little potential for further growth.

But if the fund's managers can identify suitable shares in a sector where low prices have been caused by market conditions which are now improving - such as textiles - there are good prospects for rapid growth. Alternatively, the mana-

gers can select well-established companies in any sector, which have been performing sluggishly - perhaps through lack-lustre management - but have now streamlined and are again ready to take off. These aims are not difficult to formulate. Fulfilling them is.

THIS FUND'S TRACK RECORD

Launched in 1981, Mercury Recovery Fund has had time to show whether it can achieve its aims.

The results speak for themselves.

In the 5 years to 1st March 1987, the offer price of distribution units in the Fund (with net income reinvested) grew by 425.7%, compared with the 265.0%

of the FT Actuaries All-Share Index. Over the past year, compared with the same Index, the units grew by 47.6%, against 34.6%.

The price of units, and the income from them, can go down as well as up. Past performance, it must be remembered, is not necessarily a guide to future growth or rates of return.

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Mercury is one of Britain's largest and most successful managers of unit trusts.

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The Sunday Telegraph named us Unit Trust Group of the Year, drawing special attention to our reliable excellence across all our funds over a period of 10 years.

Likewise The Observer named us Unit Trust Managers of the Year, citing our "well-founded reputation for steady and consistent performance."

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There are two ways you can invest in the Mercury Recovery Fund.

One option is by a lump sum, with a minimum of £1,000.

Alternatively, you can employ the simple and flexible method of our Monthly Savings Plan. With this you adjust your investment to suit your own requirements, subject to a monthly minimum of £35.

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The aim of Mercury Recovery Fund is to seek capital growth by investing in companies whose shares are depressed for one reason or another but which offer attractive recovery prospects. No particular level of income will be aimed for and the Fund is not recommended for investors seeking a consistently high level of income. The Managers may also invest in foreign equities and fixed interest securities when these appear appropriate.

The minimum initial investment in the Fund is £1,000. Subsequent investments may be made in amounts of at least £300.

Units may be purchased or sold at other and bid prices calculated daily. Prices and bids will be published daily in the Financial Times and prices in the Daily Telegraph but without responsibility for any error in publication or for non-publication.

Cashred notes will normally be issued within two days of receipt of applications and payment is due on receipt of the contract note. Certificates will normally be sent within four weeks of receipt of payment. Units can be redeemed at any time and payment will normally be made within seven days of receipt of the redemption certificate(s).

Management Charges an annual charge of 5 per cent, is included in the offer price of units. The annual management charge is 1 per cent, (plus VAT) of the value of the Fund which is charged annually against income and is taken into account when calculating the price of units. On joining, three months' notice, the Managers would be permitted to exercise this charge to a maximum of 14 per cent, (plus VAT). The Managers are also entitled to exercise this charge to a maximum of 14 per cent, (plus VAT) if the price of units falls below the offer price of units.

Adjusted annual accounts will be sent to unit holders, and a report on the progress of the Fund, together with a list of current holdings, will be sent to unit holders twice a year on 15th June and 15th December.

Income, net of basic rate tax, is distributed to unit holders on 15th June and 15th December each year. The Managers and other accumulation units. Yield at the offer price of distribution units on 11th March 1987 of 267.5% the estimated current gross annual yield was 2.40 per cent.

Commission is paid to qualified intermediaries and rates are available on request. The Managers of the Fund are Mercury Fund Managers Ltd, a member of the Unit Trust Association. The Trustee is The Royal Bank of Scotland plc. The Fund is a UK authorised unit trust and a "white paper" investment under the Finance Investments Act, 1981. Part D of the Managers and Trustee are permitted under the terms of the Trust Deed to sell or purchase "Invested Cash" or to purchase "Invested Cash" on behalf of the Fund in order to up to 25 per cent of the value of the Fund may be invested in the United Securities Market.

To: Mercury Fund Managers Ltd., FREEPOST, London EC4B 4DQ.

(Registered Office: Registered in England, No. 1102517) I wish to invest £ (minimum initial investment £1,000) in the Mercury Recovery Fund, in ACCUMULATION/DISTRIBUTION* units at the price ruling on receipt of this application.

I wish to invest £ per month (minimum £35) in the Mercury Recovery Fund through the Mercury Savings Plan.

DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY. A contract note or details of how to make monthly payments will be sent to you.

Surname (Mr/Mrs/Miss) _____

Full Forename(s) _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Date _____

Signature _____

I am/we are over 18 years of age.

*Please delete as appropriate, otherwise accumulation units will be allocated.

Particulars and signatures of any joint applicants should be attached.

This offer is not open to residents of the Republic of Ireland.

OR, INSTEAD OF SENDING THE COUPON, TELEPHONE 01-280 2060 BETWEEN 9.00 AND 5.30.



Unit Trust choice simplified

ACT BEFORE
5th APRIL

With over one thousand unit trusts available and more being launched each month, how do you know which to choose? In reality there are only three basic types of unit trust, and M&G has an outstandingly successful example of each: Recovery Fund for capital growth, Dividend Fund for an increasing income, and SECOND General for a balance between income and growth.

You should remember that new funds or funds which suffer a change of management are likely to be more of a gamble than those which can point to a long and successful record. M&G's investment team has remained largely unchanged for many years, and our long-term performance record reflects this. Past performance cannot be a guarantee for the future, but it is usually the best measure you have of a fund's likelihood of achieving its objective.

We are offering an extra 1% unit allocation if you invest £1,000 or more and 2% if you invest £10,000 or more per Fund.

The price of units and the income from them may go down as well as up. This means that unit trusts are a long-term investment and not suitable for money you may need at short notice.

Growth RECOVERY FUND

M&G Recovery Fund is probably the most successful unit trust ever launched and the table below shows just how well it has achieved its aim of capital growth. The Fund buys the shares of companies which have fallen on hard times. Losses must be expected when a company fails to recover but the effect of a turnaround can be dramatic.

Year ended 31 DECEMBER	M&G RECOVERY	FT ORDINARY INDEX	RETAIL PRICE INDEX	BUILDING SOCIETY
23 May '89	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000
1970	12,760	8,570	11,020	11,058
1975	26,400	11,121	21,283	16,178
1980	102,560	17,287	40,175	25,521
1985	270,800	49,474	55,233	40,164
1 Mar '87	487,600	72,365	57,813	43,773*

NOTES: All figures include reinvested income net of basic rate tax. The Building Society figures are based on an extra interest account offering 1.5% above the average savings rate (source: Building Societies Association). M&G Recovery figures are all in sterling values. *Estimated.

FURTHER INFORMATION: On 18th March 1987 offered prices and estimated gross current yields were:

	Income	Accumulation	Yield
Recovery Fund	504.7p	661.1p	2.79%
Dividend Fund	534.3p	1599.5p	4.29%
SECOND General	922.1p	1846.9p	3.15%

Prices and yields appear daily in the Financial Times. The difference between the offered price (at which you buy units) and the bid price (at which you sell) is normally 5%. An initial charge of 5% is included in the offered price and an annual charge of up to 1% of each Fund's value - currently 0.75% - plus VAT is deducted from gross income. Income for Accumulation units is reinvested to increase their value and for Income units it is distributed net of basic rate tax on the following dates:

	Recovery	Dividend	SECOND
Distributions	20 Feb, 20 Aug, 15 Jan, 15 Jul, 15 Feb, 15 Aug		
Next distribution for new investors	20 Aug 1987	15 Jul 1987	15 Aug 1987

You can buy or sell units on any business day. Contracts for purchase or sale will be due for settlement net to three weeks later. Remuneration is payable to approved agents; rates are available on request. The Trusts for Dividend and Recovery are Barclays Bank Trust Co Limited and for SECOND is Lloyds Bank Plc. The Funds are all wider range investments and are authorised by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry.

M&G Securities Limited, M&G House, Victoria Road, Chelmsford CM1 1FB. Tel. 0245 266265. Advisory Services: 01-626 4568. Member of the Unit Trust Association.

Income DIVIDEND FUND

If you need income which will grow over the years M&G Dividend Fund could be your ideal investment. The Fund invests in a wide range of ordinary shares and aims to provide above average and increasing income and a yield about 50% higher than the FT Actuaries All Share Index.

Year ended 31 DECEMBER	M&G DIVIDEND	BUILDING SOCIETY	M&G DIVIDEND	BUILDING SOCIETY
6 May '84	£396	£536	£10,000	£10,000
1985	463	650	10,760	10,000
1986	529	871	16,300	10,000
1987	1,660	1,200	24,280	10,000
1988	2,278	907	65,160	10,000
1989	2,280	750	84,820	10,000
1 Mar '87			99,940	10,000

NOTES: All income figures shown are net of basic rate tax. The Building Society income figures are based on an extra interest account offering 1.5% above the average savings rate (source: Building Societies Association). M&G Dividend capital figures are all in sterling values.

Balanced SECOND GENERAL

M&G SECOND General Trust Fund aims for consistent growth of both capital and income and has a 30-year performance record which is second to none. It has a wide spread of shares mainly in British companies.

Year ended 31 DECEMBER	M&G SECOND	FT ORDINARY INDEX	RETAIL PRICE INDEX	BUILDING SOCIETY
5 June '86	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000
1960	19,520	20,080	11,293	12,483
1965	31,320	26,230	13,492	18,093
1970	46,480	30,540	17,143	21,636
1975	79,840	39,620	33,107	31,651
1980	158,400	61,600	62,494	49,931
1985	546,000	176,240	85,918	78,580
1 Mar '87	840,560	257,800	89,932	85,641*

NOTES: All figures include reinvested income net of basic rate tax. The Building Society figures are based on an extra interest account offering 1.5% above the average savings rate (source: Building Societies Association). M&G SECOND General figures are all in sterling values. *Estimated.

SPECIAL OFFER CLOSES 5th APRIL

All applications received by 5th April 1987 will be given an extra 1% allocation of units. This will increase to 2% for applications of £10,000 or more per Fund.

To: M&G SECURITIES LIMITED, M&G HOUSE, VICTORIA ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 1FB. Please invest the sum(s) indicated below in the Fund(s) of your choice (minimum investment in each Fund: £1,000) in ACCUMULATION/INCOME units (delete as applicable) or Accumulation units will be issued for Recovery and SECOND and Income units will be issued for Dividend at the price ruling on receipt of this application. DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY.

A contract note will be sent to you stating exactly how much you owe and the settlement date. Your certificate will follow shortly.

	RECOVERY	DIVIDEND	SECOND
AMOUNT PAID IN	£	£	£
RECOVERY	00	00	00
DIVIDEND	00	00	00
SECOND	00	00	00

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

ICAL

M&G

Have a few drinks and pay by instalments

CONAL GREGORY, Master of Wine, looks at wine investment schemes

The Chancellor's decision not to increase excise duties on wines and spirits will give a further boost to wine investment. So far, three factors have put off many would-be investors - the expertise, the lack of correct storage conditions and the absence of a large capital sum.

All these elements are removed by the wine cellar schemes on offer. Drawn up by established merchants, the plans allow for the bottles to be stored under the best conditions and most allow for deferred payments, rather than one big outlay.

You should decide your investment priorities on the amount of wine you are likely to consume against possible resale.

Auction prices are firm. Michael Broadbent, of Christie's, says the auction house's sale on March 5 "witnessed strong demand for fine, mature wines with more than 120 commission bidders ensuring that virtually the whole catalogue could have been sold before the auction started".

Vintage port prices are buoyant. The 1970s are still modest, the 1975s are moving up, the 1977s are in short supply and the market is likely to rise further if the 1985s are declared in the next few months.

Good classed growths of claret for vintages such as 1978 and 1982 show investment potential, as was evident at the Sotheby's sale on March 11 and the Christie's sale on March 19.

Ken Butler runs the Hicox Wine Club (The Birches Industrial Estate, East Grin-

stead, Sussex RH19 1XZ). The club offers a regular supply of wines every three months without having to specify the brand. The minimum subscription is £10 a month with the investor choosing his own sum by standing order. On the third month's payment wine is dispatched with the balance held over for the next quarter.

Hicox gives a 2.5 per cent discount on every order and prefers customers to make their own general preferences (such as Rhône and occasional sparkling).

Justerini and Brooks Ltd (61 St James's Street, London W1Z, and 39 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2HN) offered its first tailor-made wine investment scheme in 1969. With its big purchasing power, it is able to buy at source on

until May 31, 1989. Further storage can be undertaken by a company specially formed by Justerini to separate clients' stock, known as Cellars (Wines) Ltd. Alternatively, warehouses approved by Customs and Excise can be used.

It is important to check whether free delivery is included. There is insurance at full market value, not at the original purchase price, in any scheme. Justerini, for instance, charges £3.50 per dozen bottles a year for storage and insurance beyond the free term.

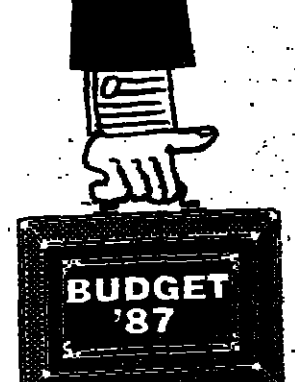
Derek Balls, director of Balls Bros (313 Cambridge Heath Road, London E2 9LQ), is planning the next offer for its City Fellowship of Wine Investment Scheme. It proposes units of wine, both mixed cases and unbroken, with free storage.

Balls Bros offers investors a selection of fine wines with one year's free storage followed by complimentary delivery on two or more dozens. Examples include Graham Malvedos 1976 at £146.40, Taylor Vargellas 1974 at £163, Warre 1975 at £197 and Port of Quinta do Novato 1982 at £130.60.

It has several good 1983 clarets, including Pichon-Longueville-Lalande at £287.40, Druon-Beaucailou at £279 and La Lagune at £117.80.

Champagne at auction is a small but significant market. Balls Bros offers Bollinger Brut 1979 at £209.80, Dom Perignon 1980 at £367, Moët et Chandon 1980 at £147.50, and Veuve Clicquot Brut 1979 at £171.50.

Charles Eve, Master of Wine at Peter Dominie, the International Distillers and Vintners' subsidiary, runs Wine Bank (Vintner House,

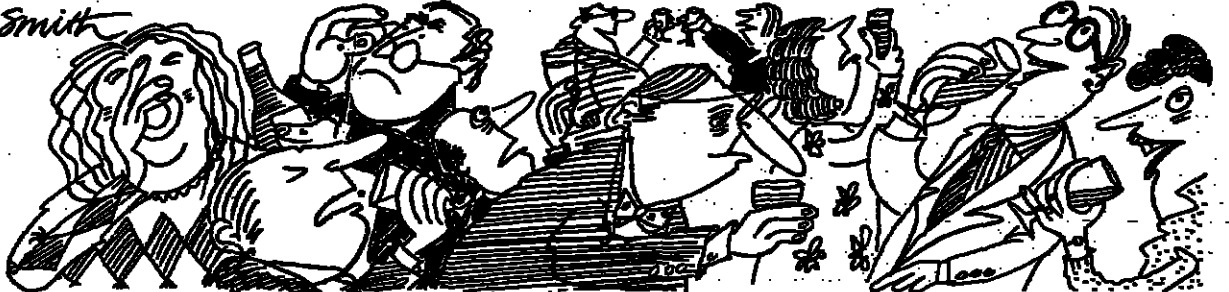


River Way, Harlow, Essex CM20 2EA). It is aimed at those who do not have time to locate fine wine. Mr Eve buys wine at early prices and advises members on how the stock is progressing.

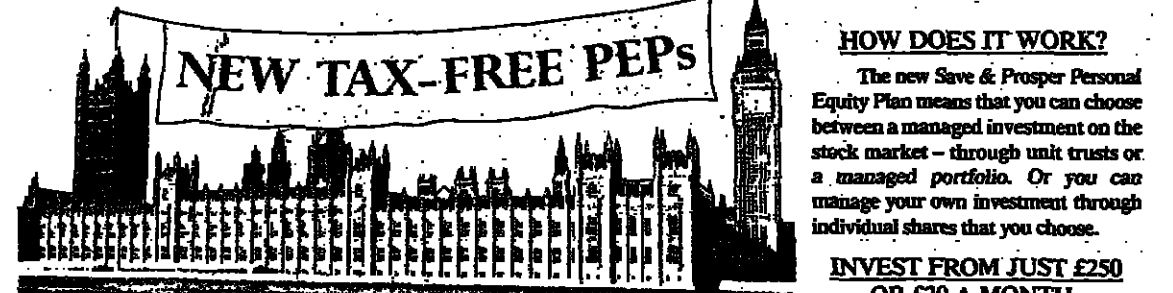
Mr Eve requires only guidelines, such as whether the investor wants the finest or would like more modest bottles. The stock is then reserved, duty paid, with a small rent every year. There is no delivery charge but dispatch can take up to three weeks.

Peter Dominie suggests a minimum £10 a month, which can be increased in multiples of £1. The Wine Bank's current offer is of 1985 clarets, such as Gascours at £172, Latour at £480, Margaux at £492, Lafite-Rothschild at £495, and 1985 red burgundies.

On resale, many merchants will buy back. Otherwise, they may put you in contact with another investor or with one of the auction houses. The latter provide the best barometer and will handle all the paperwork between the supplying merchant and the auctioneer so that you need never take delivery of the investment side of your cellar.



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NEW TAX-FREE PEPs

HOW DOES IT WORK?
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INVEST FROM JUST £250 OR £20 A MONTH.
You can start with a lump sum of £250 or £20 a month for a managed investment - or a minimum lump sum of £500 if you want to select and manage your shares yourself.

WHY A SAVE & PROSPER PEP?
Because you're only allowed to open one PEP a year, it's important to choose the right company. ...the best combination of good quality investment and reasonable charges. That's how leading independent financial planning consultants, Martin Paterson Associates, describe the Save & Prosper scheme in their latest report on PEPs.

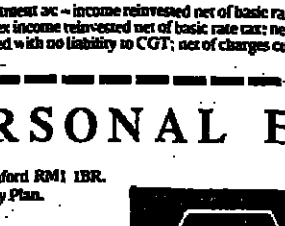
Small wonder. We've got over 50 years' experience as an investment house, with a wide range of unit trusts (investing in all the world's major markets). And more unit trust investors trust Save & Prosper with their savings than any other unit trust management group.

We're also part of a group that includes Montagu Loeb Stanley, one of the largest firms of City Stockbrokers to deal exclusively for private clients. So we can bring a unique combination of investment expertise and administrative experience to the management of your plan.

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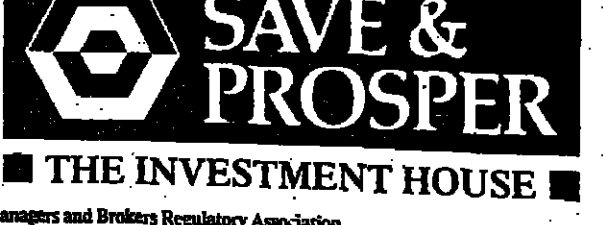
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The taxman is still getting his percentage

What action should you take to save inheritance tax before April 5?
DANBY BLOCH and RAYMOND GODFREY advise on end-of-tax-year planning and outline the changes to IHT in this week's Budget

If you had a substantial potential inheritance tax (IHT) liability on your estate before the Budget, the chances are that you still have one. And it will not be greatly reduced by the Chancellor's proposals.

Even after the last two Budgets, in which various steps have been taken to reduce some of the impact of IHT, the possible tax charge on many people's estates will continue to be heavy.

This week, the starting point at which IHT is charged was raised from £71,000 to £90,000, thereby taking many smaller estates out of the tax net altogether.

However, for rather larger estates the effects of the tax cuts are not very spectacular. For example, on an estate of only £140,000 the tax charge is still as much as £15,000, compared with £23,500 before the Budget.

On £330,000, the point at which the 60 per cent rate band now starts to bite, the post-Budget tax charge is £102,000, down from the previous level of £118,300.

In other words, the Chancellor has simplified the tax

rate structure to four bands but has not by any means emasculated IHT.

So tax planning is still very necessary if you wish to preserve family wealth, particularly if it is tied up in a business, property, farm or other non-liquid asset.

The basic strategy for mitigating IHT is to give away assets to the next generation as early as possible, if you can afford it.

Where you give away things that will grow in value in your beneficiaries' ownership, you will avoid boosting the worth of your taxable estate unnecessarily.

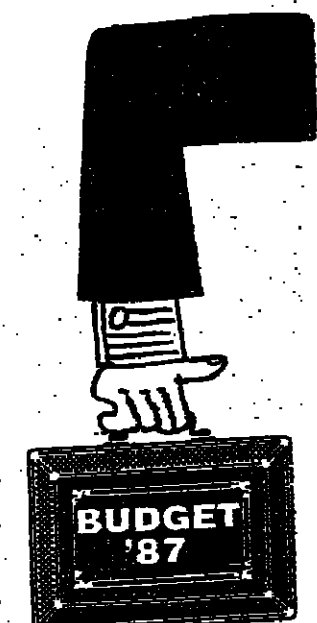
Moreover, if you survive seven years after making the gift, normally it will have escaped IHT altogether.

Another spur to making lifetime gifts now is that if there is a change of government, another Chancellor would probably reintroduce the old capital transfer tax rules and make any future lifetime transfer much more expensive.

The raising of the IHT nil-rate band is also an incentive to ask your lawyer to rewrite your will. Husbands and wives can each take advantage of the £90,000 nil-rate band in order to save tax.

For example, if a husband dies before his wife, he could pass £90,000 worth of assets down to the next generation tax-free rather than pass it to his surviving widow; for on his widow's death, it would all be ultimately taxable at anything up to 60 per cent.

In theory at any rate, a husband and wife who split up their estate equally and pass down all of it at their own deaths could have a total



appointing has not raised this year, have their uses.

Totally exempt gifts have the advantage that no tax is payable on them, even if the donor dies within seven years. So they are especially valuable to elderly or ill people.

The main exemption is the yearly £3,000 per donor. You can use up last year's allowance if you did not use it then and have already taken up the current year's exemption in full.

In such a case you could individually gift £6,000 this year tax-free or £12,000 between a husband and wife.

In addition, you could make exempt gifts from income that are regular and do not actually reduce your normal standard of living.

There are two main ways of making relatively modest gifts that have particular tax planning benefits.

If you have investments on which you are showing potentially taxable capital gains, for example, shares, unit trusts or even property, you could consider making a gift of these to your children.

You would elect to hold-over the gain, so that the child takes over the investment at your cost value plus indexation relief and he pays tax only when he disposes of it himself.

Children are essentially separate from their parents for capital gains tax and have their own CGT exemptions. This is £6,300 this year and £6,600 next year. So in due course, the child could sell the asset and set the gain against his own exemption.

The taxman will want to be satisfied that the child really does become the beneficial owner and that the transaction is not some elaborate sham. It would also be prudent to postpone the ultimate sale by the child until the next year or the year after.

But the trouble with small gifts of cash or shares or unit



worth of £180,000 before IHT is payable.

The trouble with lifetime transfers, however, is that they do tend to cut down on your income and could affect your long-term financial security if it turns out that you need the capital at some point.

Ever since Nigel Lawson reintroduced the old estate duty rules about "reservation of benefits" whereby, broadly, donors cannot give assets and continue to derive benefits from them, the scope for having your cake and eating it has been limited in this area.

Many people have therefore been reluctant to part with substantial sums either outright to their beneficiaries personally or even into trusts.

However, it is certainly good news that gifts into "interest in possession" trust will henceforth count as exempt transfers.

It allows you to make gifts into trusts where broadly the beneficiaries have the right to the income. So you will be able to retain some effective control over gifted assets, even if the beneficiaries are over the age of 25.

It remains to be seen from the legislation just how flexible these trusts can be in this context.

The new concession will also apply to beneficiaries of interest in possession trusts who give their interest.

Many people are prepared to make relatively small gifts of, say, a few thousand pounds. And it is here that the annual IHT exemptions, which the Chancellor dis-



trusts is that if the donor dies fairly soon afterwards, the recipient has relatively little to show as a result of the gift.

In contrast, a life assurance policy gifted in trust may not provide immediate gratification to the beneficiary, who may be entirely unaware of its existence, but when the donor dies, a substantial tax-free sum will be paid out.

For example, a husband and wife, each aged 65, could start a low-cost whole-of-life policy with a sum assured of just under £140,000 for a premium of £3,000 a year.

With many life assurance trusts not likely to be treated as suitable vehicles for potentially exempt transfers, straightforward life assurance planning along these lines could be in for a renaissance.

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FAMILY MONEY/7

Boom billions for the unit trust industry

February proved to be another good month for the unit trust industry. According to the Unit Trust Association, the value of funds under management rose to the record level of £37.2 billion, and gross sales, at £1.013.7 million, were the highest on record for any February.

At the same time the number of unit account holders rose by 93,000 to 3,594,000 and the number of funds on offer also continued to rise.

The latest fund launch comes from MIM Britannia, which has today introduced the MIM Britannia Assets and Earnings Trust bringing the total number of funds offered by the group up to 32.

The new fund, which is designed to achieve capital growth, will be invested primarily in blue-chip British companies such as BT, Bunnell, Dicks and Glaxo. In addition, a small percentage of the fund will be invested in companies that the fund managers consider to have assets which are either under-valued or under-used. The minimum initial investment is £500 and subsequent additions of £50 or more can be made.

A discount will be given on larger sums until April 3. For investments of £1,000-£2,499 this is 1 per cent, for £2,500-£4,999 it is 2 per cent and for investments of more than £5,000 the discount rises to 3 per cent. The initial management charge is 5.25 per cent, and there is an annual management fee of 1 per cent plus VAT.



Words on wealth

A new monthly personal finance magazine makes its debut on Monday when Family Wealth goes on sale at newsagents and bookstalls around the country, at a cover price of £1.50. The publisher promises that the magazine will provide essential advice on all aspects of managing money in simple, jargon-free language.

With the first issue readers will receive a Wealth Card entitling them to discounts on financial services, endowment mortgages, car insurance, investments, holidays and consumer services.

Also new out this week is the rather more specialised PEP Investor, published by the Stock Exchange. It is priced at £1.25 and further editions will be published every six weeks.

School book

The Building Societies Association has published a book which looks at the contributions building societies can make in preparing young people for adult life, and the provision of financial services for young people.

The first part of Building Societies in the Classroom focuses on a rapidly changing education system and looks at the partnerships developing between industry and education.

In the second part of the book there is an in-depth investigation of financial services available to young investors. It also includes an analysis of marketing strategies and a survey of young savers' accounts on offer from building societies and banks.

The association sees the book as part of its programme in support of schools-industry links and a practical expression of the building society industry's commitment to strengthening understanding between education and the business community.

Building Societies in the Classroom is available at £5, including postage and packing, from the Educational Liaison Officer, The Building Societies Association, 3 Savile Row, London W1X 1AF.

Moving costs cut

During 1988, the cost of moving home fell by about 7 per cent, according to the Woolwich Building Society's latest Cost of Moving Survey. The survey shows estate agents' competition has forced estate agents to reduce their charges by more than 10 per cent.

Solicitors are also reported to be charging on average less than last year for houses selling at £45,000 and more. They have, however, tended to increase their fees for cheaper properties.



It is the purchaser who stands to gain the most from the reduction in legal fees. Using five different price levels, ranging from a property valued at £20,000 to one valued at £75,000, the survey indicates that solicitors' total bills have fallen by 15 per cent on average, bringing the average overall cost of house purchase down from 3.2 per cent of the purchase price to 2.8 per cent.

The average overall cost of selling property is also said to have fallen, from 3 per cent of the sale price to 2.7 per cent.

Besides analysing the cost of moving, the survey also examines the trend in house prices, and concludes that prices for the current year are likely to rise by between 12 and 15 per cent.

Cutting the illness bill

The cost of being sick is about to increase again on April 1. CHARLES JACKSON explains how exemption certificates can keep costs down

Prescription charges have been increased 12 times since 1979 resulting in a cost of £2.40 per prescription item from next month. The one difference in the latest announcement was that the Government also announced its intention to spend £10 million on providing free disposable syringes for diabetics. The £10 million to be spent exactly matches the estimated revenue that will come from the 20p increase on prescriptions.

Amid criticism from opposition parties and various pressure groups the Government claims that around 75 per cent of prescriptions are not actually paid for - and therefore will not be affected by the latest increase - because the majority of users now have exemption certificates entitling them to free prescriptions.

In addition, there are various methods by which one can reduce prescription charges. So how is it done?

Children under the age of 16 and anyone over retirement age are automatically entitled to free prescriptions.

Exemption certificates are available on certain health grounds. For example, pregnant women and those who have had a baby during the past 12 months are eligible. So are war pensioners where the prescription item is in respect of a war or service disability.

Exemption certificates can also be granted to patients with a continuing physical disability that renders them housebound or unable to leave home alone.

Then there are certain "specified conditions" qualifying for exemption certificates. These include various forms of diabetes, epilepsy where continuous anti-convulsive therapy is necessary, and permanent fistula, which requires continuous dressings or appliances. Form P11 from the Post Office gives precise details of the specified conditions.

Free prescriptions are available on grounds of low income. If you are receiving

issued on grounds of low income also acts as a "passport" to free National Health Service glasses, dentures and dental treatment. In addition, if you are a pregnant or nursing mother, or if you have children below school age, you will be entitled to free milk and vitamins.

Even if you find you do not qualify for free prescriptions it is still possible to reduce the cost of being sick if you need prescribed medicines on a regular basis.

You should ask at your local post office or DHSS office for form number FP95, which you have to use to apply for a prepayment certificate. This is a form of season ticket which, once purchased, covers the cost of all your prescriptions for a set period.

From April 1 a four-month certificate will cost £12.50 and a yearly certificate £35.

Obviously it is up to the individual to decide whether to buy a prepayment certificate but, as a rough guide, if you need more than five prescription items in a four-month period, or more than 14 in a year it is worth investing in one.

One final point to remember. Most family doctors are aware of the difficulties that rising prescription costs create and, if they know the item and, if they know the item they wish to prescribe can be purchased more cheaply over the counter without a prescription, they will tell you.

However, the doctor cannot be expected to keep up with all the possible cost comparisons, so it is always worth checking with your chemist before handing over the prescription.



'Passport' to free glasses and teeth

Supplementary Benefit, Housing Benefit Supplement or Family Income Supplement, you should claim an exemption certificate. Even if you do not qualify for Supplementary Benefit, provided your savings do not exceed £3,000, you may still be eligible for free prescriptions: if your weekly income is just above the amount of Supplementary Benefit you would receive if you were eligible for it. Again, Form P11 gives details.

If you fall within any of these categories but have not got an exemption certificate, it is still possible to claim a refund for prescriptions for which you have paid. However, the refund must be claimed within three months and you must ask the chemist for a receipt.

An exemption certificate

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Premium Bond therapy, on doctor's orders

Following our item in *Family Money* (February 21) about Peter Farr and his winning ways, more Premium Bond stories have come in. **JOE IRVING reports**

A punter in Bangor, Northern Ireland, won four prizes in one draw, a Portsmouth man won two £50 prizes with a £10 block of bonds in the same month, and a Yorkshire man won £50 on his 50th birthday.

The chances against any of those being duplicated are too high to bear thinking about, but when it comes to really beating the odds none of them comes anywhere near the achievement of a doctor and his wife who have written to tell us about it.

They do not wish to be identified, other than that the doctor's first name is Peter. The doctor has had his share of wins, but the latest must surely qualify for the *Guinness Book of Records*.

He holds the full quota of bonds, and his wife also holds close to the limit of £10,000. In the October 1986 draw one of his bonds won a £50 prize. The same bond produced another £50 prize in December.

Then, as if that wasn't stretching the bounds of possibility, his wife did exactly the same, except that she won a little more. In the December draw she also won a £50 prize, and to complete the double "double", the same bond was the winner of a £100 prize in February.

While the odds against a single £1 bond winning a prize in any monthly draw are considered by the Department of National Savings to be around 1,000 to one, the chances of the same bond winning twice out of three draws are mathematically mind-boggling.

For another bond in the same household to pull off a similar feat in overlapping months, the odds are astronomical, and possibly as the doctor says, "incalculable". There are 1,800 million bonds in issue and about 170,000 prizes every month. Is there a mathematician in the house?

Peter the security guard, who featured in our previous piece on Premium Bonds, expects to average one win a month with his £10,000 bonds.

Peter the doctor regards this as "under-achieving" and claims that £5,000 should produce regular prizes.

Neither of them has hit the big money, but after their recent odds-busting feats it would be no surprise if the doctor and his wife eventually hit the £250,000 jackpot.

'I wouldn't buy scattered numbers'

which is why they are in Premium Bonds for such a large amount.

The doctor agrees that the more bonds you hold the better the chances of success. He also believes that the prospects are further enhanced by buying bonds in blocks.

It was a bond in a £2,000 block that pulled off the recent double, and his wife's dual winner came out of a £1,000 block. "I wouldn't buy scattered numbers," he says.

National Savings rejects the block theory. A spokesman said: "It is based on a total misconception of the way Ernie works."

Many people who support the block theory assume that all bond numbers are fed into the electronic machine at Lytham St Annes, Lancashire, which then shakes them up like raffle tickets in a church fete drum, and picks out the winners.

What really happens is that within a prescribed format of letters and digits Ernie puts together its own numbers at complete random, the winning bonds being those with numbers that match.

Accordingly, National Savings maintains, no bond, whether single or in a block, stands a better or worse chance than any other.

But what do the professionals think of Premium Bonds?

Patrick Lake, an investment consultant, of Newbury, Berkshire, says there are three types of situation for which he suggests Premium Bonds on



Good deals: Patrick Lake's clients have won with Bonds

the basis of a 5 to 6 per cent tax-free undeclearable return.

First, there is the client who sells his business on retirement for £100,000 to £200,000 and, even after allowances, faces a hefty capital gains tax bill payable within a year or two. Such a client's income at retirement probably makes him a higher-rate taxpayer.

Even in retirement he may be near the limit after taking into account his pension and

'A £500 win would be a big help'

his unit trust dividends. So, Mr Lake asks, where else but Premium Bonds does he put his CGF reserve fund?

Unit trusts could go down, a building society account will be heavily taxed and National Savings certificates do not make a great deal in the first year or so.

In practice, says Mr Lake, all his clients who have bought maximum holdings in Premium Bonds in their own and

their wife's names are showing returns of 7 to 15 per cent, apart from the lucky one who won £5,000.

Secondly, says Mr Lake, there is the student who has, say, £8,000 in the National Savings Investment Account and is in danger of reducing his university grant.

One of Mr Lake's student clients put half of a lump sum into the low-yielding Perpetual Growth fund and half into nil-yielding Premium Bonds. In his first month in the draw he won £500 and £50.

Finally, there is the client with £10,000 to £20,000 who is within a few years of retirement.

It should not all be put into risk investments such as unit trusts, so a small balance could go into Premium Bonds.

If the client has average luck, says Mr Lake, he will get a return which is 1 or 2 per cent less than in a building society account, "but a win of £500 or more would be a big help".

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FAMILY MONEY/9

Sir Mark, maverick and mogul

In the first of a series of key interviews with leaders of the financial services world, **JOHN ROBERTS** talks to Sir Mark Weinberg, of Allied Dunbar.

"The extent to which merchant banks' growth and reintegration depends on aggressively promoting take-overs has made the promotion of take-overs an industry on its own," Sir Mark, executive chairman of Allied Dunbar, the banking, insurance and unit trust group, told me.

"An unhealthy by-product of this is that once the bid starts, quite apart from the element of personal pride which may become involved, the merchant bank — which works on a contingency fee, rather like an American lawyer — says to itself in a large bid: 'If we do the deal we make £20 million. If not, we lose £5 million in costs.'"

"That's a £25 million swing for a bank which may have a capital base of £100 million to £200 million."

Sir Mark was the joint author of a book on take-overs, which, after almost a quarter of a century, remains the definitive work on the subject.

He takes a calm view of recent troubles: "The excesses of the last few years have brought their own breathing space. We probably need more and more disclosure to prevent excesses arising because the ability of shareholders to influence management is limited and take-overs provide healthy discipline."

Allied Dunbar was itself acquired a year ago by the tobacco-based conglomerate BAT Industries, but as a consequence, not of management weakness, rather of management outstripping its resources.

Sir Mark says: "We recognized that the financial services sector was undergoing an evolution or revolution and had the feeling that whereas we were quite highly capitalized — at about £500 million — our actual capital base was only £100 million, which was a bit small. With changes impossible to predict, we needed to broaden our base."

The first proposed solution — a merger with Jacob Rothschild's Charterhouse & Rothschild — was unacceptable to the stock market.

According to Sir Mark, the joy of joining BAT is that it is keen to invest elsewhere the cash flow generated by its tobacco activities, but does not interfere at an operating level. Although Allied Dunbar

is less noticed since it lost its separate stock market quotation, it has continued to grow every bit as fast as before, he asserts.

But the extra resources have not been deployed. Allied Dunbar has not branched out into buying stockbroking firms, estate agencies or any other similar activity of the kind so many others have favoured.

Sir Mark says: "The changes taking place together with the coming of personal pensions next year are so profound that it is the wrong time to do new things and we must concentrate on building our strength."

"The Financial Services Act in effect means that our sales force can sell only our products and that gives us a great deal of product development to do to have a complete range."

Sir Mark looked at the estate agency Bairdrow Eves but decided against buying, partly through doubts about how long after take-over estate agents would work nights and weekends, which is a characteristic of the business, partly because he thought prices were inflated, but most importantly through misgivings about the practicality of cross-selling financial services.

"The only safe thing you can say about financial services is that the customers buy from people they trust," he says. "An estate agent represents the seller, so it is not easy to follow through as an adviser to the buyer."

Strongly in support of rules on fixed commissions

But might not all this be excuses for inaction by a man who, at 55, is slowing down? Time was when Weinberg was the maverick of the life assurance industry — not just the man who popularized unit-linked life assurance but who also paid high commission to brokers sending him business.

Now he is one of the strongest supporters of the fixed commission rules introduced by the industry's new regulatory body, Lauro (the Life Assurance and Unit-Trust Regulatory Organisation).

He avows: "I have been for 11 years an enthusiast for a commission agreement. Whereas I was originally one of the poachers I realized that competition on commissions creates an unstable market because if everybody did it the commissions would escalate

in an uncontrollable way.

"If new and growing companies did it, they could only continue to do so without provoking a backlash for as long as they were small and unimportant. Then the established companies would have to hit back unless the new-comer stopped. But it is very difficult to come down from paying extra commission."

"You have this uncomfortable position for the broker of trying to make an objective choice between two products which pay him different rates of commission and it is not easy to compare."

The differentiating factor between life assurance and Stock Exchange securities is that life assurance is almost impossible to understand. Not even after the event, 20 years later when the policy has matured, can the policyholder know whether he might have been 20 or 30 per cent better off with a different policy."

But Sir Mark's meteoric rise seemed to me to have reached a plateau.

The man who came from South Africa as a barrister and created Abbey Life from nothing, turning it into a major force in life assurance, quit when ITT took control. With the backing of Hambros Bank he built a new company, Hambros Life, which later became Allied Dunbar.

Where is he now? It is five years since he took over one of the largest unit trust groups, Allied, and more than four since he took over the small private bank, Dunbar.

Most of the recent interest in Sir Mark's activities has been concerned with the appropriateness of his appointment as deputy chairman of the Securities and Investment Board, SIB, the overlord of the City's new regulatory system.

More significant, perhaps, is his willingness to engage in such activities as this, in view of his other work as a trustee of the Tate Gallery, treasurer of the NSPCC and one of the leading lights of the Per Cent Club, which is concerned with corporate support for charities.

There is a well established Law of Money that says: "Sell the shares when the chairman or chief executive becomes president of the CBI." This is based on the theory that his appetite for growth has diminished and he has run out of profitable ideas. I put this point to Sir Mark, raising the SIB a surrogate for the CBI.

He was able to point back to various similar, if smaller, roles he has played since 1978, and in that time Allied Dunbar has lost none of its cutting edge. He had been willing to give the SIB role more than half his time.

He says: "Nobody is immortal and so for the last two years my colleagues have taken increased responsibility and I have taken more of a chairman than a managing director role. Now with the SIB rule book completed I can safely cut that back to one day a week."

"Even the busiest executive can organize that, and I am moving consciously back more into Allied Dunbar because there is going to be a great deal to do, so that we can be ready for change and can take advantage of it."

Let others rush in. He has had a perhaps unique insight



Keeping in touch: the man of finance, the arts and charities

into the changes sweeping the City, has kept his resources — and more — in reserve for when the new lines are drawn and the real opportunities appear.

Sir Mark has been planning ahead. Within five years he will reach the BAT compulsory retirement age for executives, though he will almost certainly remain as a non-executive. "There are other things I am interested in doing in a few years' time but not now," he says.

The trusteeship of the NSPCC is clearly close to his heart, and the Tate has spun off a foundation because of the growing public-private sector partnership which is being introduced into such institutions.

But the Per Cent Club is clearly a major interest. Many

companies will give just a proportion of their profits to charity but Sir Mark plans to market the idea that they should become much more involved so that secondment of executives from companies to charities should not be restricted to those who have reached their limits early and are in the way.

"I've got fired up with the thing, with the idea that we don't just want companies' money but the energy and creativity that can go with their active involvement."

"It should be a recognized part of an executive's career," he says. "Many projects don't need money so much as management intelligence. If companies can be persuaded to use their skills in these areas then something will really happen in the community."

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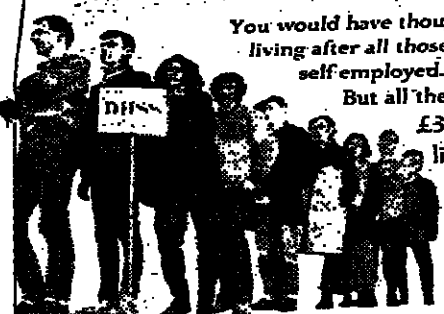
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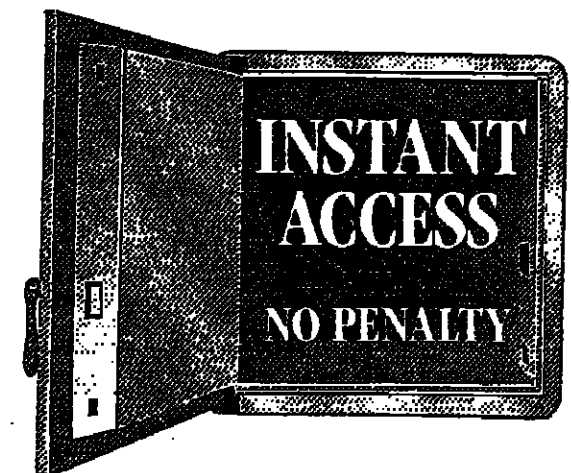
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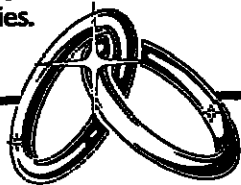
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MORTGAGES

The increase in house prices has spilled over into smaller commercial properties. Ivan Kightley, of South London Investment and Mortgage Corporation, says: "The retail market has been one of the most active in the small business sector during recent years and all the evidence suggests that this trend will continue."

He believes: "Newsagents, confectioners, tobacconists and general stores, especially with a sub-post office appointment attached, are all popular and attractive for first-time buyers and are likely to increase in value generally in line with residential properties in the area."

The reason for such demand is not hard to find. The purchase of small shops does not need the large amounts of capital required for a restaurant or small hotel, but similarly offers the attraction of employment and a home under one roof.

So how do you set about becoming a sub-postmaster at a village store, or a newsagent, publican, hotelier, nursing home proprietor, restaurateur, market gardener or garage owner? However different these undertakings are, if finance has to be raised for them, it is usually through the commercial mortgage market.

Even if your aspirations are for the purchase of such non-residential property as a lock-up shop, or an office building,

you will still have to take the same route.

Almost all lending institutions offer mortgages for residential property, sometimes with very little in the way of a deposit. There are more restrictions with mortgages on commercial properties. Different rules apply.

The amount lent, except in the case of a sitting tenant, or where excellent collateral is offered, might be only around 70 or 80 per cent of valuation. Some lenders will not supply funds for pubs, garages or agricultural properties.

So aspiring business people may have a long wait before

Government aid, the short cut

they own or partly own a hotel, a nursing home or a veterinary or dental surgeon's premises, and that is after they have got the necessary permissions from the town hall or regional health authority.

One short cut could be through government aid. If you intend to set up leisure amenities or self-catering facilities, or want to improve hotel or other resort accommodation for tourists in certain areas of Britain, you may be eligible for grants from the tourist boards in England, Scotland and Wales.

Otherwise, you will have to raise your own finance. For shop premises, different terms apply for lock-ups and those with accommodation. Some building societies lend only on the latter (Bristol & West, Cheltenham & Gloucester). Some lend on either, but lock-ups usually get at least 10 per cent less valuation, than shops with accommodation.

Banks offer Business Development Loans for businesses and professional practices from one to five years up to 20 years at different rates - around 16.5 per cent up to 18.3 per cent APR. Secured loans can have a capital repayment "holiday", if required, for up to two years. The arrangement fee is usually 1 or 1.5 per cent of the amount of the loan.

About 40 building societies make loans for office buildings. For office premises, how-

ever, the best bet can be insurance companies. Lenders include Allied Dunbar, Eagle Star, Equitable Life, Commercial Union, Gresham Mortgage London and Manchester and Royal Heritage Life. Allied Dunbar might offer on a suitable building up to £5 million at rates about 2.5 per cent above base rate. Terms range from 15 to 35 years.

The highest valuation is at 80 per cent from Equitable Life where the borrower has to pay off the mortgage by the age of 65 years.

Banks are also in this market with negotiable rates on rather lower amounts than the insurance companies and usually shorter terms, of two to 15 years (United Bank of Kuwait). Valuations tend to be higher than with the insurance companies and you might get 100 per cent at Lloyds.

Finance houses operate their own restrictions. Norwich Trust would not normally lend on a "garage" that merely dispensed petrol. There would have to be a workshop or some other building to qualify.

Pub premises are also a "no go" area, but shops in a good position could get a 15-year to 20-year loan of around 70 per cent of value. Norwich Trust prefers to work out a mortgage on an individual basis.

Exeter Trust offers mortgages on commercial premises, including investment

Pubs considered on a selective basis

properties, factory units, shops with or without living accommodation, offices, guest houses, post offices, nursing and rest homes, quality garage premises, and established leisure and sports facilities with substantial buildings. Golf courses are not usually considered.

Agricultural property with a good house is also acceptable. So, too, are up to 100 acres of land with diverse income, but intensive pig, poultry or similar farming is excluded. Licensed premises, pubs, hotels and restaurants are considered on a selective basis.

Where sufficient collateral is offered, up to 100 per cent of



Ivan Kightley: 'Active market'

the purchase price might be lent, or 90 per cent for a sitting tenant buying a freehold commercial property below the market value.

The loan size is £15,100, minimum, £600,000, maximum. Security required is 70 per cent of the bricks-and-mortar valuation on good freehold or long leasehold properties with fixed nominal ground rent. Interest is usually 2.5 per cent above the Exeter Trust base rate. This can vary a little, depending on the loan application.

Terms are up to 25 years for a capital and interest or endowment-linked mortgage, 40 years for a pension mortgage, or five years for an extendable interest-only arrangement. The fee of 1 per cent on agreement is refundable on completion but not the extendable interest system.

South London Investment and Mortgage Corporation (SLIM), a subsidiary of Pockham Building Society, offers semi-commercial loans for small guest houses, doctors', dentists' and vets' surgeries, solicitors' and accountants' offices, public houses and shops, freehold or leasehold with accommodation. Up to 85 per cent of the bricks-and-mortar valuation of the property can be lent over a 25-year term.

SLIM recommends pension mortgages as the most efficient way for self-employed people to borrow.

As a last port of call, contact the breweries or oil distributors if you want to acquire a pub or garage. Your efforts are likely also to benefit them, so they might be prepared to finance at least part of your start-up costs.

Jennie Hawthorne

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Jolly Giant	14,000	£70,000	£1.167m
Times Furnishings	14,000	£75,000	£1.25m
Under Offer	40,000	£200,000	£3.33m
Queensway	40,000	£180,000	£3m
Boots (Childrens World)	30,000	£150,000	£2.5m
Harcourt	10,000	£60,000	£1m
British Shoe Corp.	7,000	£42,000	£.76m
Carpetland	10,000	£50,000	£.95m
Dining Room Centre	10,000	£60,000	£1m
Virgin Records	6,300	£37,900	£.687m
ELS	30,000	£150,000	£2.5m
Bejam	10,000	£60,000	£1m
Texas Homecare	45,000	£225,000	£3.75m
MFI	50,000	£200,000	£3.64m
Allied Carpets	30,000	£120,000	£2.18m
World of Leather	15,000	£75,000	£1.25m
Poundstretcher	10,000	£50,000	£.95m
Comet	10,000	£50,000	£.95m

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GATESHEAD

Tenant	Size (Sq.Ft.)	Rental	Price
Texas Homecare	45,000	£225,000	£3.75m
Queensway	40,000	£180,000	£3m
British Shoe Corp.	7,000	£42,000	£.76m
Comet	10,000	£60,000	£1m
Carpetland	10,000	£50,000	£.95m
Under Offer	10,000	£60,000	£1m
MFI	52,000	£234,000	£3.9m
Allied Carpets	30,000	£135,000	£2.25m
World of Leather	12,500	£62,500	£1.042m
Poundstretcher	10,000	£50,000	£.95m
Under Offer	10,000	£60,000	£1m
Stork Babywear	15,000	£75,000	£1.25m
ELS	40,000	£200,000	£3.33m
Magnet & Southern	30,000	£150,000	£2.5m
Jolly Giant	15,000	£75,000	£1.25m
Times Furnishings	15,000	£75,000	£1.25m
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RUGBY UNION: FRANCE PLAY FOR ALL IN IRELAND AND UNPROVEN WELSH FACE A TESTING BAPTISM IN DUBLIN

French invoke vintage of 1981 in quest for the game's Holy Grail

By David Hands, Rugby Correspondent

The grand slam is one of rugby's most elusive goals. There is no trophy, no award but the team that attains it ensures a place in its country's history. England and Wales have each won eight grand slams, France three, Scotland two and Ireland one, but the French stand on the verge of their fourth at Lansdowne Road today and I do not think that Ireland will balk them.

Serge Blanco and Pierre Berbizier shared in the last French grand slam, in 1981, when Blanco spent the international season on the wing and missed the game in Dublin because of influenza.

Now, they are two of the

most influential figures in their national team and two whom the Irish will do well to police. Blanco, the effortless attacker from full back, whose timing means so much to the well-being of his wings; and Berbizier, an extension of his Agen captain, Daniel Dubroca — the captain's eyes, as it were, when Dubroca's head is buried deep in scrum or maul.

Nineteen fifty eight was a good summer for French rugby, since these two were born within a couple of months of each other. Blanco in Venezuela, Berbizier in Lannemezan in the high Pyrenees. You learn to keep your eyes open in the mountains and that is a feature of the

little scrum half's game. When Scotland were throwing everything into attack in the last quarter in Paris a fortnight ago, it was, more often than not, Berbizier who turned up to thwart them.

Blanco's 48 caps against major rugby nations say all that needs to be said about a player who sometimes irritates by his histrionics and occasional insouciance about the field, but whose amazing gifts for the game are undeniable. It will be Berbizier's 30th game today — a day when the state-employed rugby instructor (who, I wonder, will be the first Briton to appear in an international programme with that job description?) devotes himself to another televised lesson.

There has been nothing suspect about French temperament in the five nations championship this season and the only query that hangs over them is their ability to produce their best form away from home. There have been other games, other seasons when they have fallen at the last championship hurdle — Scotland, in 1984, are the most obvious recent example — but their all-round excellence should outweigh anything that Ireland can bring to bear against them.

Should the game become the sort of dogfight we had to endure in Dublin two years ago, France are equipped to handle that, too. It was a brutal match, which Ireland drew 15-15, thanks to five penalties from Michael Kiernan, who practiced his goal-kicking in the wintry sunshine at Old Belvedere's ground. That, too, was Brian Spillane's finest moment, though injured forced off the field against the French.

His recall today at flank forward at the expense of Nigel Carr has set Ireland



Back in attack: Blanco, vying for a second grand slam year

buzzing, since the Bohemians' No. 8 has not had a distinguished club season, whereas Carr's speed and energy in the tackle seemed one of the prerequisites to Irish success.

Spillane's recall can be justified by the need to have extra height to counter the tall French back-row trio and, possibly, to bolster a suspect front five. But England, if they have indicated nothing else this season, suggested that two short flank forwards — Ross and Winterbottom — can stop France running the ball through their back row: Carr will be sorely missed.

Ireland retreated to a private training session on Thursday, working, I imagine, on just that back-row area. But, whereas the other home countries made little im-

Gray's way with grey matter

By Ian Edwards

Like all these who care for the good of rugby, Tony Gray was a sad and disappointed man after the Wales-England debacle at Cardiff on March 7. He was and because the spirit of the game had been abused and disappointed in his capacity as coach to the Welsh team, that a golden opportunity for developing his young side had been missed.

The remaining home internationals are unlikely to be sullied by a repetition of such needless violence but he is afraid that the forthcoming World Cup could produce even worse incidents.

"This is the second game in a short period of time in which the Welsh team has had to contend with extreme provocation and violence," he says. "In our international last summer in Tonga we were subjected to a concerted, physically aggressive attack. It was absolutely mayhem, far worse than what we saw at the Cardiff match."

While he expects Wales to perform well in the World Cup, the prospect of playing countries outside the International Board makes him apprehensive after the Tonga experience. "These countries might decide on a policy of confrontation and disrupt the more established teams in order to make a name for themselves," he warns.

He is concerned that Wales will equip themselves well as far as discipline is concerned. "Psyching up Welsh players is no problem. The first boost comes when they're selected, and the second when they're in the team. Then all they need, what I have to do is to quieten them down and that is why the most difficult area I work in is the position above the eye-balls."

Coping with the top four inches of grey matter is the area of greatest concern to him as coach because he is aware of the dangers of players being over-motivated. "There is a peak at which they're ready to produce their best," he says. "Once they go over that, their performance suffers."

He talks as if he has been in the job for years instead of 15 months but that is as much a legacy of his several attitudes to the game as of his playing experience.

Only recently did it dawn upon him that he had been preparing for this responsibility for as long as 25 years. Climbing down last month from the attic of the family home in Bangor, his father clutched a dusty Friars School exercise book, dated 1960. It was the year his son was made captain of the school rugby team and the book was a list of matches played that season.

On turning the pages, Tony saw that even then he had noted much more than a predictable record of match results and scores. He had analysed individual performances, closely and candidly, himself of several aspects of play that could be improved upon by the next match. Subconsciously, he had laid the beginnings of a career in coaching.

Rugby being a game of skill and tactics, he has been a player to develop their individual skills to the full. "I've also tried to impress upon players not to put the ball into touch whenever possible but to let the opposition do that. It's not a risky policy because it puts opponents under pressure and makes our players think ahead. If a Welsh player wins the ball, gains 10 yards and we don't maintain possession at that point, it's a disaster. It's only a successful move if we keep the ball alive."

GOLF

Miss Macdonald makes her point and history

By John Hennessey

Fiona Macdonald advanced the frontiers of golfing history a little further at Formby yesterday. Last year she had become the first woman to play in the University match yesterday she became the first woman to score a point, having been disappointed in both foursomes and singles in 1986.

This time she and Ian Ward, in the bottom match for Cambridge, beat Tom Tew and Roger Turner by 2 and 1 after various vicissitudes over 36 holes. Cambridge won the foursomes by four matches to one and so need only to take four of the ten singles to turn a tide which has run Oxford's way for two years.

The first alarm for Miss Macdonald and her partner sounded just before the turn in the afternoon. From five-up they lost three holes in a row and then, after a 17th hole which was a 25 ft putt, they were saved only by a 25 ft putt of 25 ft at the 17th.

Miss Macdonald holed another good one, from perhaps half the distance, to gain another important half and four-up with six to play, secured a secure enough position. But again the Cambridge lead was eroded. A long putt by Tew and a chip by Turner laid the ball dead beside the hole at the 13th and 14th and Miss Macdonald missed a six-inch putt into a bunker at the 15th. A fairway bunker, however, trapped Turner at the 17th and there was no further reprieve.

The top match was a match for only nine holes. Karl Frearson, the Oxford captain,

and Michael Mallin, reached the turn in pair figures and, stood one-up against David Meacher and Jamie Rumble. Thereafter they went into sleep decline, losing seven out of the last eight holes of the morning.

A four at the 19th put Cambridge still further ahead whereupon Frearson and Mallin pulled themselves together to win three holes in a row. It looked like being four at the 23rd, but Meacher, playing in his fourth university match, contrived an exquisite bunker shot for a half. Thereafter it was plain Cambridge sailing.

James Robson, of Oxford, called a penalty shot on himself when his ball moved after address at the 12th in the morning, an instance of honesty being the worst policy. He and Angus Chivers were beaten at the 36th by Michael Broom and Gordon MacGregor.

RESULTS: Foursomes: Cambridge 19-17 Oxford (Karl Frearson and Michael Mallin beat David Meacher and Jamie Rumble 19-17). Singles: Cambridge 19-17 Oxford (Karl Frearson beat David Meacher 19-17, Michael Mallin beat Jamie Rumble 19-17, James Robson beat Angus Chivers 19-17, Angus Chivers beat James Robson 19-17, David Meacher beat Michael Mallin 19-17, Jamie Rumble beat Karl Frearson 19-17). Foursomes: Cambridge 19-17 Oxford (Karl Frearson and Michael Mallin beat David Meacher and Jamie Rumble 19-17). Singles: Cambridge 19-17 Oxford (Karl Frearson beat David Meacher 19-17, Michael Mallin beat Jamie Rumble 19-17, James Robson beat Angus Chivers 19-17, Angus Chivers beat James Robson 19-17, David Meacher beat Michael Mallin 19-17, Jamie Rumble beat Karl Frearson 19-17).

Woosnam moves into contention

Ian Woosnam birdied four of the last eight holes to move strongly into contention for the Moroccan Open championship in Rabat yesterday. The Welshman scored a second round 71 to edge within a shot of the halfway pacemakers, Andrew Stubbs, and the Mexican, Ignacio de León.

Woosnam, who has a three under par halfway score of 143, said: "I'm happy with that. I am hardly placed to go for the title over the final two rounds."

Stubbs, one of the shortest hitters on the circuit, defied logic with his 72 on the huge 7,400 yards Royal Dar Es Salam course. But he insisted: "This suits my game perfectly. I would much rather hit woods into the greens."

He is on 142 alongside de León, who included four birdies in a 72. The player from Mexico City has won his tour twice by finishing 41st at the qualifying school in La Manga last December and plans to play as many events as possible this season.

Continued from facing page

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Swinging 67 from a classic Faldo

From John Ballantine
New Orleans

Nick Faldo, who had his swing straightened out by a leading teacher, David Leadbetter, in central Florida last week, had eight birdies in a brilliant 67 in the second round of the New Orleans Classic yesterday. Tom Watson, his partner, scored another 69 and Ken Brown had a 70 to qualify easily on 141.

It was one of those days when nearly everything went completely right for Faldo. His big slow swing worked like clockwork and made most aspects of the game look quite easy. Alas, he made one or two small errors which robbed him of a superb card.

He dropped a stroke at the first, when he missed the green, but had four birdies in the next five holes, pitching one out at the long second and getting down 12-footers on the fourth, fifth and sixth greens.

Out in 33, he was five under par overall and appearing on the leaderboard. When he holed from six feet and from 20 feet on the first two greens after the turn he was nearly at the top of it.

He played the 360-yard 12th, a comparatively easy affair if you stay left, poorly. His drive was pushed right and his approach iron shot was blocked by high trees.

He hit a high pitch over the bunker and from 30 yards did well to explode to six feet, only to miss the putt.

He struck back with birdie six-footers on the next two greens to move into joint third place at eight under.

At the long 15th, trying for something special, he pulled his drive into the lake and ended up dropping a stroke by taking a six.

Liverpool can win title by beating Spurs, Pleat says

By Clive White

David Pleat believes that Liverpool will have won the championship — with still about a quarter of the season to go — if they defeat his Tottenham Hotspur side tomorrow. That is, unless the Londoners pull off their second television spectacular in successive weeks. If they were cast in the role of heroes last week, it will be nothing compared to their popularity now, should they restrain the champions.

Victory at White Hart Lane would leave Liverpool at least nine, or as many as 12 points clear of the field, depending on how Everton get on against Charlton Athletic. For a side who were still three points behind their great Merseyside rivals this time last season, that would be tantamount to the championship being declared a 'no contest'. Hence Pleat's belief that if Liverpool beat them "they will have their hands on the trophy."

For a manager who flirted with championship dreams, watching Liverpool in midweek against Queen's Park Rangers was an alarming experience. Even though Rangers deflected eleven-twelfths of the Red Army, one raider still got through to undermine the good work. There seems to be no way of containing Ian Rush.

When asked on how to restrain the Welshman, Howard Kendall, the Everton manager, recently replied: "With the nearest half a dozen men." Rush's 20th goal in 32 games puts Clive Allen's 40 in one season into sharp perspective.

Liverpool, though, did show some human failings in defence, in which Whelan performed at left back. But such

Boxing's two of a kind



Transatlantic call: Mike Tyson dropped in on Frank Bruno at his Canning Town gym yesterday to wish him luck for his bout with James Tillis at Wembley on Tuesday (Srikumar Sea writes). The two last met five years ago when they were training in the same Caskills gym and Bruno (pictured here behind Tyson) remembers the 15-year-old sweeping the gym after training. Since then, the kid from Brooklyn has cleaned up the world, wiping the floor with 29 heavyweights. Bruno was pleasantly surprised to find that success had

Oxford train at secret venue

By Jim Raiton

Oxford University went into hiding yesterday only eight days before the Boat Race, next Saturday (12.15pm).

All the crew turned up early at their boathouse at Putney yesterday, loaded the racing shell on a trailer and drove off to an undisclosed training venue. They told their boatmen: "We will see you next Monday." A scheduled BBC television recording session at Putney today was cancelled.

It is normal practice for Oxford and Cambridge to boat on the Tideway a full two weeks before the race. Oxford's unprecedented action led to speculation that there had been another rebellion in the camp following February's walkout of their American crew members after a row over crew selection. Another mutiny, however, is unlikely as the whole crew was present yesterday before their departure for a secret training venue.

The most likely explanation is that an unhappy Oxford, in a desperate situation after being well beaten during the week by Imperial College and the Tideway Scullers School, simply want peace and quiet and they may be experimenting with their rowing order.

Cambridge are far from happy either. On Thursday they changed positions once again on their bowside and yesterday all but one of their stroke side men were changed around. Their international, Paddy Broughton, was for the first time, stroking with the American, Jim Peck, at six and the freshman junior international, Matthew Brittin, back at four.

At least Cambridge ended the day with a victory over their reserves, Goldie, by three-quarters of a length.

CAMBRIDGE: 1st Clarke (Shropshire HS) and Fiddell (Hampshire), 2nd P. A. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 3rd G. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 4th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 5th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 6th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 7th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 8th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 9th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 10th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 11th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 12th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 13th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 14th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 15th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 16th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 17th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 18th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 19th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 20th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 21st J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 22nd J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 23rd J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 24th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 25th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 26th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 27th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 28th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 29th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 30th J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 31st J. S. S. (Shropshire HS), 32nd J. S. 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